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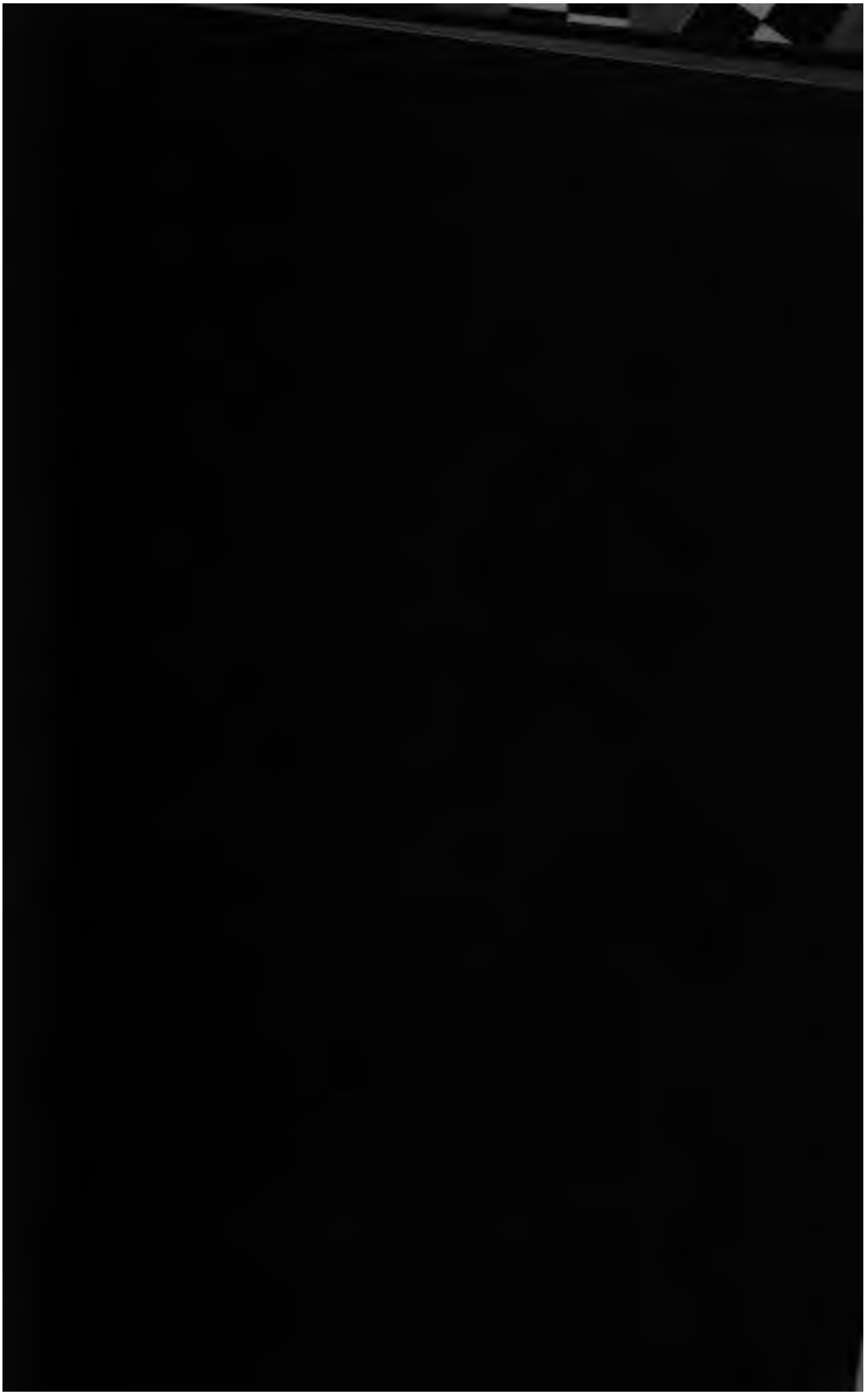

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THE TRUTH

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION

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THE TRUTH

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION

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Translated from the German, under the Author's supervision
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With a Prefatory Note
By ROBERT FLINT, D.D., LL.D.
PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

VOLUME I.

EDINBURGH
T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET
1894

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE author of the work now submitted to the British public in a translation enjoys a very high reputation in Germany alike as a theological writer and a theological teacher. At the age of thirty-nine he was called to succeed Dorner in the University of Berlin. His works on the *Nature of the Christian Religion* and *Truth of the Christian Religion* are extremely fresh and ingenious in thought, while remarkably free from those literary peculiarities which so often make German theological treatises difficult and unpleasant reading. He and Professor Herrmann of Marburg are generally recognised as the two most eminent and interesting representatives of the Ritschlian or Neo-Kantian theology. This theology has been dominant in Germany during the last fifteen years, and is still gaining adherents and growing in influence. In fact, no other German theological school or movement can at present compare with it in strength and vitality. Hence young men from this country who study theology in Germany almost inevitably come more or less under its influence. It is certainly a force in the theological world which must be reckoned with, and which eminently deserves to be studied.

It has got some very noteworthy features. It strives to represent Christian faith as its own sufficient foundation. It seeks to secure for religion a domain within the sphere of feeling and practical judgment, into which theoretical reason cannot intrude. It would keep theology independent of philosophy, free from all contamination of metaphysics. It would rest it entirely on the revelation of God in Christ. It claims to be thoroughly evangelical and Lutheran. It aims steadily at the promotion of piety, the satisfaction of spiritual wants, and the furtherance of the practical work of the Church. It is intensely sincere and alive.

Now, we may doubt its ability to make good its chief claims, and yet deem it very desirable that it should be allowed to set them forth among us for itself, instead of leaving them to be judged of at second-hand from summaries and criticisms which may be neither accurate nor just, and must be inadequate. Hitherto, however, so few works marked by the general features of the Ritschlian theology have been translated into English that any satisfactory study of it has been impossible for readers unacquainted with German. Hence the volumes now issued have a claim to be welcomed as a contribution towards supplying a want in this connection, as well as on account of their intrinsic merits.

At the same time it must in justice be remembered that the Ritschlianism of Professor Kaftan, however, does not imply on his part any want of independence or originality as a thinker. It is a mistake to conceive of the relation of Ritschlians to Ritschl as like what was once the relation of Hegelians to Hegel. Ritschlians are, as a rule, by no means repeaters of the particular

opinions of Ritschl; they merely move in the same general current and direction of religious thought. Professor Kaftan's views are not infrequently very different from those of Ritschl. In the work now published he has not, so far as I have observed, once mentioned the name of Ritschl. It is with Professor Kaftan's own thoughts and positions that the reader alone requires to concern himself.

Having suggested the publication and translation of the present work, I have felt bound to comply with the request to write a few lines of preface to it. I shall only add, that wherever I have compared my friend Mr. Ferries' translation with the original it has seemed to me to be exceptionally well executed,—an accurate and even elegant rendering.

R. FLINT.

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,
November 10, 1893.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

A COMPARISON of this translation (vol. i. pp. 202–3) with the original text (p. 150), will show that in the former there is an addition, amounting to fully half a page of the English. The alteration in the German was made by Professor Kaftan in a note privately communicated.

ERRATA.

Vol. I., p. 58, l. 2 from foot, delete comma after "himself."
Ib. p. 166, l. 17, for "Amalric" *read* "Amalrich."
Ib. p. 249, headline, for "Aufklarung" *read* "Aufklärung."
Vol. II., p. 91, l. 2 from foot, for "(I. p. 383)" *read* "(II. p. 26 f.)."
Ib. p. 223, last line, delete comma after "well."

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First Division

ECCLESIASTICAL DOGMA

INTRODUCTION.

THE leading presupposition of any proof is a clear and distinct conception of what has to be proved. To give an account of this matter is therefore the first duty of one who wants to prove anything. That duty I have sought to fulfil in my treatise on the *Nature of the Christian Religion*,[1] and can refer in the following discussions to that previous inquiry. It is necessary, however, to repeat some points of it here, and to indicate their exact bearing on the new problem with which we are now concerned.

First of all I emphasise the fact that by the truth of the Christian Religion which has to be set forth here is meant the truth of the Christian *Faith*, *i.e.* the *Articles of Faith* distinctive of Christianity. Theoretical propositions, of course, do not form the leading and properly determinative factor in the entire phenomenon of religion: that has been repeatedly and exhaustively shown in the previous studies referred

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, Zweite Auflage, Basel 1888. As it cannot be assumed that English readers are acquainted with this work, the author has communicated some of its fundamental ideas, so far as seemed requisite, in the form of short notes to the present translation. These notes have been inserted in the pages at which reference is made in the text to the earlier work.—TR.

to. But it is implied by the nature of the case, and the fact must now be explicitly set forth here, that in a discussion on the truth of religion it is the theoretical aspect of it that comes into consideration.

With regard to Feelings we cannot properly say that they are true or untrue. If we do so nevertheless, it is a derivative usage of language. We speak of true feelings in the sense, say, that we mean the expression of them agrees with what the person concerned perceives in his heart; so that we transfer a point of view which is primarily adapted for judging the relation between thoughts and words, to the analogous relation of the feelings to their expression in gesture and tone. Or we understand by true feelings nothing else than what we otherwise call genuine feelings, *i.e.* such feelings as correspond to a presupposed ideal. That is the same use of the word as when we speak of a true Christian, a true patriot, and so on. The point of view is similar to that just mentioned, in so far as in the present case also a comparison between two things lies at the root of the matter; the difference is that in the present case a process in human consciousness is not compared with the expression of it, but is measured by an ideal. But there can be no other meaning if we speak of true feelings. Or if there should still be another meaning, that too would be distinguished from what we generally understand by truth, where there is a question of the truth of a scientific theory or of a religious faith. The religious feelings of the Christian can only be indirectly regarded from this latter point of view, in so far as the question is whether the *faith*

is true by which they are enkindled and in connection with which they appear as Christian.

The case is similar with regard to the injunctions of morality, to which such great importance is assigned in the Christian religion. As they are represented in the conscience, they claim to be directly valid without any further justification or demonstration. If we ask whether they are *true*, that does not mean whether they are subjectively valid in the manner stated, but it means whether they are really to be referred to God, and because of such origin have the significance of objective laws of the world. The question therefore goes back, as before, to the other query whether the Christian faith which ascribes such significance to them is true. We are concerned with the truth of the *Faith* when we inquire regarding the truth of the Christian Religion.

I recall the further fact that all religious faith is faith in God, and all knowledge derived from faith is *knowledge of God.* Only that knowledge never applies to God as He is in Himself, but always to God as He reveals Himself; and then since the revelation of God must be sought in some way in the world, the world also becomes an object of religious knowledge; further, since the revelation of God always has reference to man in particular, to his weal and woe, man too is specially brought within the sphere of this knowledge. Only faith is not concerned strictly speaking with the constitution of the world as we know it by experience, but with the relation of God to it. In the same way it is not the nature of man as it is in itself, but that nature in its relation to God, that faith can speak of. God

then, we can say finally is the sole object of faith and of all knowledge derived from it.

This applies to the Christian faith also. God in His relation to the world, to the history of humanity, and to the individual man, is the object of that faith. To inquire regarding the truth of that faith means nothing else than to inquire whether the explanation which it gives of this subject is true. Thus, too, we might simply say that our inquiry has to be directed to the revelation of God in Christ, to its truth and reality. In fact we shall have to maintain in a later connection that the proof of Christianity can be nothing else than the proof for the correctness of this rule for our knowledge. Only I should like for the present to rest satisfied with the observation that in the way just described the Christian faith is knowledge of God. For from that circumstance there is derived a method of formulating the object of proof which might be the more convenient for the present, because it makes the more general character of the undertaking plain. *The Christian faith asserts that it is the true knowledge of the first cause and of the final purpose of all things.* For the knowledge of God which is gained in that faith amounts to this that in *Him*, in His creative will, the origin of all things must be sought, and that in His decree, which must irrevocably be fulfilled, the purpose has to be recognised by which in the last resort the course of things is regulated. In so far now as the Christian faith makes such a claim, it desires on its part, as readily appears, to offer just what philosophy has sought from the first as the "highest knowledge," or as the solution of the enigma of the world,

and has often enough asserted it has found. The task is no other than that of proving that the knowledge supplied by *Christianity* as to the first cause and the final purpose of all things is *true*.

But then what is meant when we say that anything, a faith, a species of knowledge, a theory, is true or the reverse? A provisional answer to this difficult question we shall have to seek even here in the Introduction. Otherwise the conception formed of the problem that has to be solved would remain defective.

Now in the first place, as was already casually observed, we understand by truth the agreement of the words of a speaker with his thoughts. That is subjective truth, as it is called. In the sphere of religion it comes into consideration in so far as there can be a question in any given case about the subjective truth of a *confession* of faith. If we speak absolutely of the truth of the faith it is not this that we mean but the *objective* truth of it. And the question here is what that signifies.

We answer it by saying that a proposition, whether merely conceived or also expressed, is objectively true if it agrees with the state of things in reality. Here again, therefore, truth means the agreement of two things which are compared with one another; only these are not now, as in the case of subjective truth, thought and word, but thought and what is real, given, actual. I believe I am not wrong in asserting that it is this agreement which we all have in view in everyday life when we describe a statement, a theory, a faith, as true or untrue.

But then, doubtless, whoever enters further into the

subject, and attempts to justify this notion of truth in all its aspects, cannot avoid the further questions, what it signifies again to say that anything is real, how we come to recognise anything as real, and by what test we can determine whether a thought or statement agrees with reality. But now countless difficulties rise up on the path of him who seeks to answer these questions. Hitherto they have not been decided in a way which is recognised by all, and cannot be cleared up in a sentence or two here in the Introduction. For the present we simply avoid them, and content ourselves with the common notion of truth just mentioned, which is suitable to start with, because it is accepted by all, and every one daily makes use of it. Still it will be necessary to define this common notion of truth somewhat more exactly.

Now, if I am right, there are two things that come into consideration here, one of them always, the other in many cases, and these the most important. The fact that we hold anything to be true always signifies that we are convinced that it is, or maintains itself as it is, apart altogether from our knowledge or faith. Our knowledge or faith adds nothing to it, makes no difference in the state of the case. The fact that anything is objectively true means nothing else whatever except just this, that it is in this way wholly independent of our subjective relation to it. Then the other point is this, that by the assertion we frequently intend at the same time to declare our expectation that we could count on the matter for the future. True, it is evident that that intention applies only to certain cases. Yet if the significance is for this reason

restricted, it is, on the other hand, where the intention does apply, as in the case of general propositions or general facts of a permanent nature, that the chief interest comes in which we feel with regard to the truth of a proposition. I notice the point, because this also comes into consideration when we are determining what has to be understood by the truth of the Christian faith.

For obviously we mean by that phrase nothing else than what the common notion of truth signifies, and signifies just when it is defined more particularly in the way we have now done. Let the ways and means by which we are assured of the truth of the faith be what they may; granted that in this matter the result depends on personal experiences in the heart of man, and that the knowledge founded on these maintains its value only if it is perpetually conceived in these personal relations,—still the fact that we call it *true* has just the significance that the state of things we believe in is real, and maintains itself as it is, apart altogether from our faith. And the test by which the truth of the faith has mainly to be proved is the satisfaction of the expectation which attaches to it with regard to the future,—in the first instance the expectation that in divine revelation faith has an inexhaustible fountain of consolation and peace brought near to it for all time, but principally the expectation that the promise of life is fulfilled beyond the grave.

That objections could be made from the standpoint of the Christian religion to this explanation of what we have to understand by the truth of the Christian faith, there is no need to fear. But any theological

misgivings in reference to it may, I think, in that case remain unnoticed. For, in the first place, we can say even the theologian does not take any other view of the matter as soon as he puts his theology aside, and simply lives as a Christian by his faith. Further, we can only concern ourselves with proving the truth of the faith in the sense which the Christian church understands when it holds its faith to be true. Besides, lastly, it has previously been shown[1] why the sincere believer cannot but regard his faith as true, and ascribe decisive importance to the truth of it. It is for the reason, namely, that religion is a matter of life and bliss,

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 130. In religion it is not Theory that is the essential matter, but Feeling and Will. It is true there is no religion that is not at the same time Faith; without such Faith and a branch of knowledge contained in it religion is not conceivable at all. But the nature of faith or religious apprehension shows that knowledge is never the proper aim of religion. For religious apprehension is not objective, determined by external objects, but rests on subjective motives. And these subjective motives lie in feeling and will, *i.e.* in the practical nature of man. Religion proves to be an essentially practical affair of the human mind, just because in it even theory is governed and determined by practical motives. For example, in the Christian view of the world, which refers everything in particular in the world to the will of God (Matt. x. 29–31), we have to do not with the scientific explanation of the events in it, but with the assurance that our life and what makes it of value is safely held in the hand of the Almighty Ruler of the universe. But it follows, at the same time, just from these practical motives of faith, that the believer takes the greatest interest in the truth of his faith, that religion itself must be given up as soon as the supposition that the faith is true is given up. For how could a person obtain consolation and encouragement for action from faith in God's government of the world, if he did not admit that such divine government of the world really existed?—But the practical interest which is at the basis of religion is more particularly the interest one has in his own life, in the protection of it, and of the good things which give it value. The first and simplest motive for religion is therefore the experience that man himself cannot sufficiently guard his life and the good things connected with it, and that he is not in a position to satisfy all the demands which he makes on life. But further, he gains the experience that he does not find anywhere in the world what puts the craving of his soul to rest. Then

while the truth of the faith is a condition of the real possession, and final and complete attainment of the religious blessing. In this, then, it is likewise implied that the believer understands the truth of his faith in no other sense whatever than that which has just been explained.

It is therefore the truth of the Christian Religion, *i.e.* of the Christian faith, the truth in this sense, that has to form the object of proof.

It is faith in the first instance that possesses this truth, and is certain of it. Now, as faith taken as a whole rests on personal functions, the same is true of

that experience impels him to seek his proper satisfaction in a good which is beyond and above the world, in God Himself, in participation in His life. And so the strictly religious impulse of the soul is disengaged. Now, it is manifest that in this way a principle leading to great variety is posited in religion. Thus in religions of a low type it makes a great difference whether regard for earthly blessings is what predominates, or whether everything else falls into the background behind the craving for the chief good, that which is above the world, for God Himself. Then there comes the difference between natural and sensuous blessings on the one hand, and spiritual and moral on the other. The two principles of distinction cross each other, and so there result four primary forms of religion, viz. :—(1) Natural Religions; in which regard is had throughout for earthly and sensuous advantages, for the protection and welfare of the natural life: (2) National Religions; in which the moral advantages of national life that are shared by the community are the main concern, especially the national State as in ancient Rome: (3) Spiritualised Natural Religion or Mysticism; in which a chief good that consists in being merged in the Godhead and its life is aspired to, but in such a way that the object of desire is not regarded as something moral, but is sought in ecstatic experiences; an instance being furnished by Brahmanism in India: (4) lastly, Christianity; which teaches us to recognise the chief good in the kingdom of God above the world, and therefore also in participation in the life of God, but which represents the kingdom of moral righteousness in the world as the correlative of that, and so combines religion and morality in the closest manner, so closely that it declares moral development in the world to be the sole path, having its sanction in God's own eternal nature, by which to attain to participation in God.

that certainty which forms an integrant part of faith. Consequently there will also be a mode of proof in the Christian church which aims at awakening and establishing that certainty as a cherished conviction of faith. But with a proof of that kind, such as is attempted in preaching, we have here nothing to do. Here we are concerned rather with a *scientific* proof. But neither is such a proof furnished when science, doing in its own characteristic manner what preaching seeks to accomplish, sets forth Christian truth in an exact, connected, and exhaustive fashion. Such a presentation can never do more than show that that truth is in agreement with itself, has no gaps left in it, and contains no contradictions. And however important it is to show that, in so far as the opposite state of things would invalidate the claim to be the truth, still it is not strictly speaking a *proof*. It can quite easily be conceived that a view of the world which is consistent with itself and logically developed, is still objectively false. Thus it does not suffice for a proof even though it is shown that Christian truth is exposed to no misgivings on such grounds. Rather can the proof consist only in considerations which do not themselves have the truth of the Christian faith as their presupposition, which bear on facts and relations that are given independently of it, considerations therefore which exist for every one, and are calculated to convince every reasonable person. At least it is this that we understand in general by a proof, and that Christian theology has aspired to from the first. Even for the church itself, *i.e.* for those who are assured in faith of the truth of Christianity, only a

proof of this sort is of value. Faith craves for no proof at all; the believer may require one so far as he wants to be assured that the Christian truth recognised by him in faith is consistent with what he recognises elsewhere as truth. But no presentation of Christian truth, however precise, serves him for this purpose, but only a proof of the kind just described. Above all, in view of those who doubt and are alienated from the faith is the church under obligation to aspire to such a proof of Christianity, and to rest in no other. Only thus can she maintain her position in the world of thought.

And such a proof is possible at all events. I mean —supposing the Christian faith is true, the proof is possible; it must therefore always seem possible to the Christian church, the existence of which rests on that supposition, and to theology which represents the standpoint of that church. That follows from the univeralism of the Christian faith, from the fact that the Christian recognises in his God the Almighty Creator and Lord of the world. For it is implied in that that there must be an actual connection between Christian truth and the truth otherwise attainable by man, that there is only *one* truth and that *all* truth is from God. The sphere of thought peculiar to the Christian faith and the sphere of thought identified with the rational knowledge of things cannot lie wholly apart from one another: it must be possible to combine them so as to make a whole. Otherwise indeed it would not be the case that human reason was itself created by God, and that the knowledge of things attainable by it was

intended by God, as we must hold the Christian faith assumes.

But if we inquire regarding the way in which this proof can be presented, we are at once confronted by a peculiar difficulty in the problem. It arises from the fact that we have to do with that truth which is claimed and possessed in the first instance by *faith*. That is, from what we formerly recognised as the nature of faith, we have to do with a kind of knowledge which one cannot appropriate without considering the underlying judgment of value. Or to put the matter differently, one cannot arrive at a conviction as to the truth of the articles of faith without the mind's freedom being concerned in the process, without the will and private judgment of the individual being called into requisition. And now a scientific proof has to be given for this truth, *i.e.* a proof which appeals to men's intellect, but simply disregards their will and private judgment. At least it is in this characteristic that the nature and value of a scientific proof are generally supposed to be found. The difficulty of the problem, therefore, consists in the circumstance that a kind of truth which the mind's freedom is necessarily concerned in apprehending has to be proved scientifically, *i.e.* objectively, without regard to the will and to judgments of value.

If now this proof is to succeed, is it not necessary to divest Christian truth of the form in which it is first presented, namely, as the truth of faith, and to give it such a form that it can become matter for an objective scientific proof? It seems quite possible to do so. For faith itself starts with the supposition that it has to

do with a reality which is given as such independently of faith. Therefore it will also be possible to conceive and exhibit that reality otherwise than through faith, namely, objectively. And should faith thereby suffer harm? The fact that it is by faith that man is first aware of that reality has its ground after all in this, that the reality is of decisive significance for the personal life of man, that man, indeed, with his existence and its purpose is himself implicated in that reality. Since that circumstance must not be lost sight of, our evangelical church insists on the Christian accepting revealed truth with living faith. But of course this position did not require for a moment to be given up when that very reality came next to be made a matter of objective knowledge. On the contrary, the more exact that knowledge became, the more distinctly would there be seen from it what is implied by the facts, namely, that we have to do with such a reality as has been described, one reaching to the inward experience of man. And more than that, if we regard the truth which first became a matter of inward conviction through faith as developed into a system of objective knowledge, man would even then stand at the centre of the whole. For even this objective knowledge would still continue to be *human* knowledge, and therefore also the reality through which faith lives would be recognised by it from the standpoint of man. Faith therefore does not seem to lose in any way in the process. And this at all events would be gained that an objective scientific proof for the truth of the faith would now become possible. Of course not as though on this procedure

there were two complete things requiring to be done, as though we first sought to know objectively the reality presented to faith, and then gave a proof for the truth of that knowledge. Rather under the circumstances supposed would the one thing be accomplished in and through the other. The proof would consist in this, that the necessary connection of this reality with all reality otherwise discoverable would be pointed out, and it would be shown how we could become certain of this truth by the same means with which we arrive at objective knowledge in general and attain to absolute truth. The feasibility and actual accomplishment of the undertaking would already contain proof in itself that the Christian faith is truth of that description.

If we look more closely at the undertaking, it appears doubtless that a consequence of deep and incisive significance would be involved in it, the consequence, namely, that in this case even the *Dogma* of the church could not consist of articles of faith, but would have to assume the form of *Gnosis*.

The church cannot dispense with a body of dogma. In order to fulfil her vocation in the world, she requires a didactic presentation of Christian truth which, itself taking its norm from Holy Scripture, serves as a guide for the church's preaching and has to claim authority. While the church can never of course disregard a proof for the truth of Christianity, because with that proof she would give up Christianity itself and the truth of it, a body of dogma in the sense just mentioned is still more indispensable for her than any proof. For the proof serves after all only for the maintenance of

Christianity in the world of thought; dogma, on the other hand, is indispensable for the internal life of the church herself, for fostering piety in her members. And if now what was essentially required was that this dogma, *as derived from living faith*, should be permanently formulated as the truth of faith, it would best answer its immediate purpose. But if the method of proof described above proves to be correct and to be demanded by the subject, then dogma itself must assume the form of Gnosis. Then the church in her most immediate interest will be quite unable to do otherwise than assign it that form. For according to the supposition the presentation of Christian teaching in the form of objective knowledge is made for the sake of truth: in this aspect of *truth* it asserts its power better than if it is developed in the form of articles of faith. Why then should the church refrain from making this better instrument serviceable for her own internal life as well? Supposing there is really only a difference of *form* involved in this transformation of the knowledge of faith into objective knowledge, in that case as soon as the practical life of faith and the cultivation of it demand, it will be possible with little trouble to adapt the objective knowledge expressed in dogma to the requirements of that life. But supposing there is any change in the *matter* implied at the same time, this change will have to be reckoned as an advance in the knowledge of the truth, and consequently as an improvement.

Now if this is the case, the result is that the function of Dogmatics is also determined in the same sense. Dogmatics and Apologetics must then coincide. For if

dogma itself rests on an objective knowledge of the reality first known in faith, Dogmatics too, the function of which lies at all events in the line of dogma, will have to concern itself with the objective knowledge of that reality. And if even for dogma, for the fact that it assumed that form and no other, the question of the proof was a determining element, it will certainly have to be regarded as the function of the science of dogma to go into the proof of the truth of its propositions. To put it briefly, the proper centre of all theology will then be formed by *a single science*, not of the truth of the faith of Christianity, but *of the objects of the Christian faith*, a science which like every other rests on an objective knowledge of its matter, and while developing its propositions undertakes in whatever way it is done to prove them true. For this at all events we may say makes the difference between common and scientific knowledge, that the latter leads not merely to assertions but to proofs. In particular, as regards the proof for the truth of the Christian faith which is here aimed at, it could consist in such circumstances only in the accomplishment of the combined Dogmatic and Apologetic undertaking. At least that undertaking would have to be sketched in its main features if it were to be held that a proof had been furnished.

What has been described up to this point as an hypothesis is no other than the course which things really took from the commencement in Christian theology and the Christian church. When Christian theology arose in the second century on the ground of the civilised world of antiquity, the circumstances

of intellectual life were such that an objective knowledge of the facts of the Christian faith seemed possible, and was therefore attempted without hesitation. What was just declared to be necessary under this condition was in fact accomplished at that period by the force of internal necessity. How imperatively the task was imposed by the situation may be gathered especially from the circumstance that at that period the difference between the knowledge of faith and objective knowledge was not even brought to the consciousness of any one. It came about quite naturally that the theologians of the early church attempted to ascertain objectively the reality with which faith has to do, and that from these endeavours ecclesiastical dogma arose. So far as I know at least, none of them ever clearly realised to himself the peculiar conditions under which the knowledge of faith is placed. Even in the discussions on πίστις and γνῶσις, on the difference between them and on the necessity of advancing from the former to the latter, no such acknowledgment is contained. For already what is understood in this connection by πίστις is no longer faith as meant by us in the full New Testament sense of the word, but first and foremost the faith that rests on authority, the acceptance of authoritatively delivered truth. But if faith is so conceived, it is no longer *faith* that leads to intimate and personal converse with the subject; it rather seems to be *knowledge* that must be sought, for the very reason that it is only by means of it that the truth first adopted externally by faith is also inwardly appropriated. There is nothing therefore implied here that could be represented as an appreciation of the

difference between the knowledge of faith and objective philosophical knowledge. In that age there was an entire want of such appreciation. If ecclesiastical dogma arose from a transformation of the articles of faith into γνῶσις, that was not a matter of deliberation or choice, but what was required by the circumstances and what followed as a matter of course.

But what determined the commencement of Christian theology had the same significance for the further development of it. Down to our own time, the procedure in theology described above has continued to give the lead. I mean that procedure which aims at a scientific knowledge of the *content* of the Christian faith, *i.e.* not such knowledge as is supplied by faith but that which is *objective*, in which therefore the proof for Christianity is immediately combined with the presentation of Christian truth. Doubtless since Kant's time, all sorts of counter influences have been brought into play in opposition to this theological discipline furnished by tradition with its specially dogmatic bent. Nevertheless it will always have to be described even yet as the properly dominant one. Those counter influences, it is true, have left no one unaffected who has been concerned with the subject, but they have created an overmastering impression only on a very few; and even where this is the case, the new attempts are not yet always defined as against the old method with the clearness that is to be desired.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, this prevalent method is not the only one possible. The proof of the truth of the Christian faith might also be presented in such a way that the character of faith

peculiar to Christian knowledge would be preserved in the process. With this end in view, it would have to be shown first of all, that answering the last and highest questions relating to the cause and purpose of the world is not a matter of objective theoretical knowledge at all, that what is necessary for this is rather a faith which is governed by a practical idea. Next we would have to proceed to prove that it is precisely the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God that meets the demands which reason makes on a supreme principle employed to interpret the world, and that therefore the Christian faith which is governed by that idea can claim to have absolute validity as the faith of practical reason. Then the last step to our end would consist in showing that the Christian faith again proves to be objective truth, only through its being founded on a divine revelation in history. In other words, the proof of the truth of Christianity would form itself into a proof of the reasonableness and the absolute validity of the faith reposed in the Christian revelation. That would be the other possible way.

The difficulty which we mentioned in starting would be overcome in this way also. Not, however, because Christian truth would be divested of its character as the knowledge of faith and would be made to adapt itself to the objective scientific proof. Rather on the contrary because it proves to be the case that human knowledge taken as a whole cannot be completed without losing its purely objective character the higher it rises: even the scientific proof for a final theory of the world can be furnished only if it appeals not simply to the intellect but to the whole man, *i.e.* only

if it appeals simultaneously to the will and the mind's freedom. For into this sphere we are of necessity introduced, if we have to do with the proof of the absolute validity of a practical idea. No one can even understand such an idea unless experiences in the field of internal freedom have helped him to do so. The difficulty alluded to would thus be removed on this other possible alternative, not through the Christian faith receiving another form to suit the method of proof, but through the method of proof which the case requires showing itself to be one which answers to the Christian faith, to its character and its form.

The consequences of this method of proof in their bearing on the shaping of dogma would also be quite different from those of the method first discussed. There would now be no necessity for the church to accommodate itself in its dogma to the forms of objective knowledge which are foreign to the faith as it is in itself. On the contrary it would now form part of the very interest of Apologetics to avoid this as carefully as possible, as something that was unmeaning, and that could only lead to a misconception of Christian truth. And Dogmatics would have no other task than that of deducing all its propositions in an exact and positive manner from the rule furnished by divine revelation and previously proved to be rational: in this deduction, *i.e.* in the proof that a particular proposition expresses an idea which is a necessary one in connection with the Christian faith, there would, at the same time, be contained the only possible proof of the absolute truth of the special

article of faith referred to. Dogmatics would not be a science of the *objects* of the Christian faith; to supply a *scientific presentation* of the Christian *faith* would be the chief task pursued by it. In particular, the proof of the truth of that faith which is here aimed at would no doubt under these circumstances form the presupposition of Dogmatics, but would not have to do in any way with the proper business of that subject.

It follows from all that has been said that the question, which method has to be pursued as the correct one is of the greatest significance, not only for the proof of Christianity and the working out of it, but at the same time for the church itself, and for the organisation of theological study as a whole. But the decision of this question does not rest either with the church or with theology. It can rather be drawn only from the general mental life of the time. When it was stated above what course things took at the very beginning in church and theology, there had to be mentioned as the cause which determined that course the supposition which was then prevalent that something might be made out by scientific means as to the cause and purpose of the world. But so too as regards the proof of Christianity that was sketched in the second place, there was indicated as the first and most important element of it the demonstration that no objective knowledge, but only a faith which has its norm in practice, attains to the solution of the last and highest problems. Thus, all that follows is settled by the decision which is come to on this general question. True, only the procedure in Apologetics

depends directly on that. But, as has been shown, the method of proof inevitably reacts with far-reaching effect on dogma and Dogmatics. And now since Christianity as the universal and spiritual religion among civilised peoples cannot without surrendering its cause relinquish proof, *i.e.* the connection that obtains between itself and the general mental life of those peoples, it is quite impossible to prevent the form impressed on Christianity in church and theology at a given time from being determined in part by the condition of mental culture at that time. That has always been the case, and presumably matters will always so remain.

In my treatise on the *Nature of the Christian Religion* I have already frequently expressed the conviction that the proof of Christianity which influenced the formation of dogma and governs theological tradition does not meet the modern demands on such a proof, that it is rather only a method like that named above in the second place that satisfies reason and suits the condition of science as at present existing. And further, in that work, as the connection in the studies alluded to required, I attempted in particular to show that it is only when that method of proof is adopted that Christianity itself is neither transformed nor curtailed. Our task will now be to develop in all its aspects what could only be indicated in the former connection, and had to be introduced substantially without proof, and we shall have to make good its correctness. That must be effected principally by discussing the general question just mentioned, the

question whether and in what way man can arrive at a knowledge of the first cause and the final purpose of the world. For in it is involved what is decisive for our procedure in Apologetics. Still, I do not consider it to be advisable that we should enter forthwith on this discussion. What seems to me to be required is rather that dogma and the method of proof determinative of it should first of all be subjected to a thorough examination. And that for the following reasons.

In the first place, dogma is not a theological experiment of a peculiar nature co-ordinate with others, but a subject of extraordinary significance *affecting the world's history*, one which, in spite of manifold counter influences, continues to govern men's minds even at this day. Whoever then thinks he ought to break with the method of proof which is connected with dogma will find himself under obligation to give account of the reasons which make him decide for that course. He will only be able, too, to count on a hearing if he succeeds in eradicating that method, and therefore he will at all events have to do what he can to strengthen the counter influence brought to bear against it. There is, besides, the fact that the articles of dogma, although they are the product of the theological activity of past times, have, notwithstanding, for large classes of people in the Christian church, the significance even as dogma of being the venerable and even the sacred and solely authorised expression of Christian truth. Whoever, therefore, undertakes to set forth the proof of Christianity in another way will neither be able, without

first coming to an understanding with dogma, to make the import of that undertaking plain, nor to refute the objection that it would be fraught with danger to Christian truth itself. Consequently, there must be an attempt by such a discussion to make it clear not only that the altered method of proof implies a thorough transformation of the structure of Christian doctrine, but also that that transformation, instead of being injurious to the Christian faith or curtailing it, serves to give it purer and fuller expression. And although it were possible in connection with the general discussion to overthrow the method of proof which determined dogma, and therefore without making that matter the subject of an independent examination, and even if the definitive proof of that negative judgment can, in any case, be presented only in this later connection, still it seems to me that the further object mentioned can only be reached by a special study bearing on ecclesiastical dogma. Therefore I consider it necessary to enter first of all on that topic.

It follows also from this arrangement that our study of dogma must be of a *historical* nature. An explanation of dogma which turned on general considerations would presuppose that the counter evidence against the prevailing method was already led. It would be an application of the general discussion and would have to follow it, and could not come in advance of it. But above all it would have no independent significance for the purpose of invalidating that method of proof. On the other hand something of the kind may be expected of a historical study which

introduces the subjects of the origin, development, and overthrow of dogma. For it may be gathered from it that the counter influences opposed to the method of dogma, forming as they do since Kant's time a ferment in our theological activity, are not a passing disturbance of a development which, in spite of it, retains its vitality at the core and its power of growth, but spring from the knowledge that the theology to which dogma owes its origin lies behind us as a rounded whole, in respect to its historical development, that we have really to break ground which is relatively new, and that Protestant theology in attempting to do so is only submitting to the task which is imposed on it by the Reformation.

Then again it is required of course that we should keep this historical study within the narrowest limits, and that we do not let it grow into a sketch of the History of Dogma, one which from its brevity would be quite worthless. It will be of importance always to keep clearly before us the point of view from which our study is undertaken, to remember, viz., that our object is to become acquainted with and to understand the history of that general basis and vindication of Christian truth which we have in dogma or which is connected with it: what is of importance from this point of view will have to be mentioned, what is a matter of indifference so far as it is concerned will have to be left out of consideration. Nothing else can be settled in advance; it can only be shown by the execution of the work that a study of the kind is quite possible.

In view of all that has been said we divide our

inquiry into two sections. The first will have to be devoted to a study of ecclesiastical dogma in the sense that has now been particularly explained; the second will attempt to work out the proof of the truth of Christianity which has been outlined above.

First Division.

ECCLESIASTICAL DOGMA.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF DOGMA.

Introduction—The relation of Religion, Science, and Morality in Greek Philosophy—The Logos Idea—The rationalistic moralising mode of thought and the speculative mystical mode—The origin of Dogma in the combination of the Christian faith with the Logos speculation—Preliminary inference.

We have already alluded in the Introduction to the origin of dogma, to the fact that it arose from the attempt to gain an *objective* knowledge of the content of the Christian faith. This is still more strictly true of ecclesiastical theology as a whole, to which dogma owes its origin. But the difference which doubtless exists between theology and dogma does not call for further notice here, as we have not to do with dogma as such, but with dogmas as theological results. If, nevertheless, we speak by preference of dogma, it is because we acknowledge in this way that ecclesiastical theology as a whole interests us, not the particular schools or systems of it but that theology itself in the main stream of its development. It is to it that the

truth applies that the aim at an objective knowledge of the content of the Christian faith forms its essence, and that it has impressed that character on the dogma as well which has been derived from it.

But if this is the case, there is another element besides the Christian faith concerned in this theology, and consequently in dogma, viz. reason, the intellect, or whatever else we may call it. In the abstract, this is of course self-evident. The truth would stand so even if the dogma of the church consisted of nothing but articles of faith. For even in that case the work of theology, *i.e.* scientific activity, the organ of which is the reason, would be indispensable in order to exhibit and formulate it. But it is just a comparison with this other possible case that explains how the matter stands with regard to the share of the reason in the origin of dogma. In the determination of articles of faith there would be a question only of the development and precise definition of a *given* spiritual reality, of the derivation of the particular articles from a *given* principle; the activity of the reason would in this case be subordinate to the matter in hand; here, from the nature of its task, it could not itself claim any other function than that of ministering to the subject-matter, any more than in those other instances where there is a question of determining and describing given relations and associations. But it is different when there is presented the problem of ascertaining *objectively* the reality offered to Christian faith; here the reason gathers quite another significance for the solution of the problem. For it now falls to be considered, not merely as a formal means, but as an

independent organ of knowledge alongside of faith. Under these circumstances, quite as a matter of course, there is conceded to it, *i.e.* to its inherent rules and standards, an influence on the *conception which is formed of the subject-matter* which is being investigated, *i.e.* on the conception of the objects of faith. And thus the fact that dogma arose from an elaboration of the content of the Christian faith by means of reason gains a much wider import than it would have in the other case.

But it is not enough to see clearly that reason was thus concerned in the origin of dogma in a manner directly affecting the *conception of the subject.* We must further inquire *what sort* of reason gained this influence. We are inclined, it is true, to regard reason as a constant quantity. We are also warranted in doing so within certain limits, in so far as reason in its simple offices appears in all men as the same, and there is therefore a large amount of human knowledge that remains the same, or at all events is subject only to that change which in the lapse of time is obvious to all as an *advance* from the less to the more perfect. But with the reason which has co-operated in the formation of dogma the case is essentially different. For here we have to do with an exercise of reason which does not stop with the investigation of given things and relations, but seeks to answer the last and highest questions, those relating to things in their totality. And this reason or, say, the reason so asserting itself, is *not* a constant quantity. A glance at history shows this. To begin with, the general question how far reason takes us in these matters has

been very variously answered at different times, and by different schools at the same time—apart altogether from religious interests and theological considerations. Above all, when they have to give a definite judgment on those ultimate questions relating to the cause and purpose of the world, thinkers become widely divergent from one another; but every one appeals to reason in behalf of his own view. We have it therefore as a fact in history, that reason in this sense is not a fixed and unalterable quantity, but is subject to manifold change; occasionally, indeed, what one century had rejected as irrational has again passed muster as rational in the century succeeding. We can set up the ideal, that even in this relation all are destined to find the same things rational or irrational; we can strive to reach the goal where all may be united on the ground of reason in a common conviction. But we cannot assert that this is now the actual state of things. And hence it is not enough to say that reason was concerned in the formation of dogma; we must further inquire *what sort* of reason it was.

The answer is simple enough. It was the reason in vogue in the existing Græco-Roman world, as we become acquainted with it in the Idealistic philosophy of later antiquity. For of the philosophy of a period we can say that it gives expression to the reason prevailing at that time. In it the mental life of an epoch mirrors itself, out of which the philosophy springs to take part in turn in moulding the life. And it is by no means satisfied with comprehending what is actually given in experience, but aims at comprising all knowledge and carrying it out to the solution of ultimate

questions. In it, therefore, we perceive what the reason of the time has to say regarding these. Thus in philosophy we become acquainted with reason in that particular function of it in which it was concerned in the origin of dogma. And further it is with the Idealistic philosophy of later antiquity that we have to do. Here the more particular assertion that it is the *Idealistic* philosophy that falls to be considered will require no further justification. It stands to reason that between the Christian faith and Materialistic or Sceptical theories of philosophic birth there were no points of contact. *Consequently the Christian faith and this philosophy are the two factors from whose interaction ecclesiastical dogma arose.* Our task will be to determine more exactly the proportion in which each of them participated in the process.

We determine it first of all by saying that the Christian faith supplied the *content* of dogma, but that its *form* is derived from philosophy. There are various reasons which recommend this proposition as our starting point. The first is that the case stands actually so; it is a fact which is plain to our view, and can be inferred without hesitation from what has already been said. For if dogma gives expression to an *objective* knowledge of the content of the Christian faith, that means simply that in the dogmatic shape the truth to which the faith lays claim has acquired another intellectual form, one which is not derived from faith. And then of course this form can have its origin only in the reason as the organ of self-subsisting knowledge (that which is independent of faith), *i.e.* only in the philosophy of the period referred to. Farther,

it may be asserted that at all events the aim of the old theologians was no other than that which is expressed by the proposition before us. Nothing lay farther from their intention than deliberately to mix up the Christian faith with heathen philosophy. To set forth that interpretation of the faith which was within their reach and actually attained by them, and to defend it, was the object which they pursued. The dogma resulting from their efforts was meant therefore from the nature of the case to be nothing but an expression of Christian truth. But it is just as certain that their scientific work as such, and consequently the form of dogma, was determined by philosophy. This is not contradicted by the fact, say, that some of them, as *e.g.* Tatian, Irenæus and Tertullian, contended against the philosophy of the ancients as the source of all errors. For that opposition applies to the content and not to the form. As regards its form, what the Christian teachers announce is a parallel to philosophy, being the very truth which is opposed to the errors of the philosophers. A glance at the theological labours of the Church teachers who have been mentioned shows too that in the formal reference they simply assumed the attitude adopted by the warmest friends of the old philosophy; their work as well as that of the others is an attempt to arrive on the lines of the current philosophy, and by its means, at a knowledge of the objects of the Christian faith. And therefore the above-mentioned definition of the relation of the factors at all events expresses the intention of those who became the framers of dogma. Then there comes lastly and with decisive force the fact that the views of

scholars on the point in question diverge greatly from each other. Especially, as the effect of Harnack's *Dogmengeschichte*, discussions upon it have lately been set agoing again in which quite opposite conceptions have been given forth. If now our treatment of the subject is not to be deprived antecedently of all power of producing conviction, so far as many people are concerned, and so to fail of its purpose, we must select a point of departure for it that is not objected to. But so far as I know no one denies that the philosophy of antiquity generally speaking had a share in the formation of ecclesiastical theology and of dogma; and even he who estimates this share as very slight will be unable to make any objection to the assertion that for the intellectual *form* of dogma it came to be determinative. Consequently it is advisable to fix on this point as the one from which we must start in our endeavour to gain a comprehension of the shaping of dogma.

But now the question comes to be which way we have to take from this point in proceeding with our study. To settle this, let us consider somewhat more closely what is implied in the adaptation of Christianity to the intellectual form of philosophy.

This at all events is implied in the first place, that Christianity is thereby placed in a relation to *science* and to knowledge as such which is wholly foreign to it as religion, even on its theoretical side, so far as it is religious faith. And further it was placed in that relation to science which was found existing in philosophy. For, of course, it is not the case that this philosophy was or sought to be mere theory, science and nothing else. Certainly it was that too, and

indeed first and chiefly—being the sum total of science at that time, a time to which the modern distinction between special investigation and the philosophical research which is directed to things in their totality was still unknown. But simultaneously it followed out practical objects as well, including objects of a religious nature, supplying indeed the place of religion to large classes of people who had broken with the popular faith. Thus there already existed in this philosophy a definite combination of religion with knowledge as such. That Christianity adapted itself in theology to the intellectual form of philosophy means nothing else than that it came to be implicated in this existing combination.

But we must turn our attention to another element besides. The philosophy which comes under consideration was not merely the science of its time while connecting with it religious points of view, but it also aimed above all at regulating the life of its votaries, and therefore contained a moral ideal for which it sought recognition, and the absolute validity of which it defended. Being in this way not only science but at the same time a religious and moral type of thought, it formed an exact parallel to Christianity. It was the same ground in the economy of man's mental life that they both sought to occupy. And the affinity between them was completed by the other fact that Christianity on its side again included *a species of knowledge which embraced the world.* The Christian religion therefore produced the impression even in the cultured Græco-Roman world that it was a new philosophy. I recall the fact that Justin *e.g.* so describes his faith. Never-

theless the formal distinction exists in the abstract that Christian knowledge purports to be religious faith, the knowledge of God in philosophy to be the consummation of man's knowledge of the world, or to be the fullest blossom of theoretical knowledge, as the case may be. But now even this distinction was obliterated by theology, and the Christian faith was adjusted to the intellectual form of philosophy. Ecclesiastical theology forms a parallel throughout to the philosophy which was found ready to hand. The fact that the latter came to have a decisive influence on the form of dogma has this significance that *Christianity was implicated in that combination of religion, science and morality which was found existing in philosophy.*

At first sight it may seem arbitrary to make mention here of the moral regimen of life as a third factor falling to be considered. For even granted that Christianity was placed by theology in a relation to knowledge, after the fashion which was current in philosophy, what has that to do with the moral life and its regimen? Now closer consideration shows at once that the reference to morality can by no means be put aside. Both the subjects with which we are concerned include, each by itself, a definite moral ideal as an essential element. On the one hand Christianity from its general nature may be described exactly as a peculiar combination of religion and morality. On the other hand the relation in which philosophy places religion to knowledge furnishes a supreme point of view from which to pass judgment on man's moral life. Consequently it is impossible to consider the

implication of Christianity in that relation without making mention of morality as the third factor falling to be considered in the case. For in Christianity as religion, the moral element among other things is implied. And if in like manner the relation falling to be considered in philosophy touches upon morality, the question certainly arises, what influence that circumstance has exercised upon Christianity.

It is now apparent from what has been said which course we have to follow in further treating our subject. We shall first of all have to fix our attention on the combination of science, religion and morality that existed in the Idealistic philosophy of later antiquity. Then we shall be in a position to understand and to appreciate the origin of dogma in that aspect of it which has to be considered by us.

If what we have to say on the theme which has just been formulated is to be intelligible, a more exact explanation is first of all necessary of what is meant by each of the three subjects—Religion, Morality, and Science—when taken by itself. This explanation can, it is true, have only a qualified significance, as there is no generally recognised definition of those three notions. Yet in starting with such an explanation I have no fear of exposing the discussion which follows to the risk of seeming to be a piece of subjective ratiocination governed by fixed presuppositions. For of course the question is not about notions merely, but about given, viz. mental, realities. Thus one who prefers other modes of thought than ours may assign a somewhat different significance to those notions, and may desig-

nate those realities somewhat differently—still it remains true that they are actual positions and reciprocal relations which are here discussed, if we assume that the definitions serve for the exposition of the matter in hand, but that no *conclusions* regarding the matter are drawn from them.

With regard then to *Religion* the case stands thus, that everywhere there lies at the basis of it the striving of humanity after the blessedness which is expected to be got from the Godhead. Every religion therefore contains a group of ideas in which the relation of the Godhead to the world of man is represented from this point of view of the bestowal of human blessedness, and institutions, the support of which is calculated to promote this end which is aimed at. Consequently, where ideas are met with which fall under this point of view, or where acts are performed or prescribed as the case may be which bear upon this object, there religion is a living power, whether because it furnishes men's guiding thoughts and motives or because it is concerned in a more indirect manner in giving them shape.

Where *Morality* is spoken of we have always to do with the government of human conduct. And of course it is government of a different sort from that which results spontaneously from the natural motives of the human will. Thus it often comes into conflict with these. Indeed we shall have to reckon among the characteristics of everything we have in view when we speak of morality, moral judgment and moral action, the circumstance that a law is operating in each case which puts restrictions on the natural will, and confronts the individual man with commanding authority.

Without this tension between the natural will and such a law we men would hardly distinguish the moral point of view from all others as one which is peculiar, and assign to it so much significance as we do. Still there is no compulsion associated with this law, not even such as is indirect, like what is associated with the civil law: there is an appeal to human freedom. This is morality on its formal side. As regards the content, nothing human is in itself exempted from being placed under this point of view. It is pre-eminently, however, to one's conduct in social relations, and to the attitude of the individual towards the sensuous impulse of the moment, that moral judgment and moral precept refer. Man's concrete active life in the world may therefore be described as the sphere to which moral interests are chiefly attached. This it is, too, above all that we understand by the field of morality, where we speak of it in what follows.

Last of all, *Science* springs from the endeavour to extend as far as possible by means of methodical procedure our knowledge of the actual world, to free it from errors, and to combine it in a systematic whole. This endeavour may as a matter of course have very various issues. That is owing to the general presuppositions that regulate it. Especially does it follow also from these whether or not the attempt is made to reach out beyond the world by means of scientific investigation. But it is always the characteristics that have been mentioned by which science is distinguished from ordinary knowledge on the one hand, and from religious faith and the productions of poetry and rhetoric on the other.

These are the three subjects with whose relation to each other we are concerned, each of them taken by itself. That they do not stand apart from one another but must interpenetrate each other where they are represented by the same person, is obvious. Strictly speaking, indeed, we ought not to conceive the matter at all as if each of them in the first instance signifies something by itself and then a combination takes place between them where they meet. It is rather this union that is actually found, and the distinction between them which takes place is a function of our discriminating faculty; and therefore it is nothing but a necessary expedient required by our disintegrating and recombining procedure in research, and is not a correct expression of the fact, when we speak of a combination of parts. At least this holds true of religion and morality, of their relation to each other. With science the case is somewhat different, because often it forms part of the growing equipment of a life only after a foundation for the religious and moral guidance of it has been laid; and thus it is often actually true respecting it that it enters into a combination with the other elements. But in the normal course this result speaking generally cannot fail to take place. The groups of ideas connected with religious faith and man's scientific knowledge of the world respectively inevitably collide, so that a reconciliation between them must be sought for. On the other hand scientific activity as well as the rest of men's doings becomes an object of moral judgment. And again science has to do with religion and moral life, since

as phenomena in the mental and historical life of men they belong to the actual world which science aims at comprehending. However, we have not at present to trace the various possible combinations, of which, if we follow out the subtler relationships, the number is large. We have rather to discuss the special question, what combination of those three subjects governed the Idealistic philosophy of later antiquity.

But something of a general nature must first be mentioned, as forming at this point the presupposition of the more special consideration. This is the strong emphasis laid on *knowledge* in Greek philosophy —on knowledge, *i.e.* that mental function which lies at the foundation of science, or else the mental possession which science endeavours to extend and complete. And it is just in view of morality and religion that so great significance is ascribed to knowledge. That virtue is a species of knowledge is a principle which, ever since Socrates laid it down,[1] permeates the mental life of the Greeks, is reiterated by many and by no one wholly denied. For even though the Post-Aristotelian systems give prominence to the practical aim of philosophy as a whole, they thereby presuppose that knowledge is necessary and indispensable for virtue. In like manner it is a principle of Greek thought to regard knowledge as a peculiarly human function. It is by it that man is distinguished from all other living creatures. In it, if he is wise, he seeks blessedness or the chief good. But this means that even in religion nothing else is equivalent in significance to knowledge. According

[1] Zeller: *The Philosophy of the Greeks*, ii. 1 (3rd German ed.), p. 117 ff.

to Plato philosophy is true piety.[1] Aristotle declares pure thought to be the chief happiness, and discovers the essence of the blessed God in his thought of himself.[2] And if the Stoics, as is true, set the practical moral life above knowledge, yet according to their conception of that life the wise man has to seek his happiness in solitude where he is independent of the ebb and flow of a restless active existence.

Now who could mistake the great truth implied in this emphasis laid on knowledge? Socrates saved the moral consciousness of his people by lifting it from the sphere of shifting opinion to that of knowledge. And the spiritual passion of the Platonic system has not even yet lost its charm. Within the field of popular heathen religion how much more then must it count for an extraordinary step in advance when Plato enriched religious thought with such noble impulses. His power to do so he owed, however, to scientific speculation.

And we shall not be warranted in resting contented with recognising in this way a relative and historical justification for this point of view. There is a *permanent* truth implied in it. Whoever reflects on human things very soon makes the discovery that everything of superior worth in our life is conditioned by knowledge, or more precisely by that relative independence of the intellectual faculty as respects the will which is peculiar to man alone. Without this there would be neither religion, nor morality, nor art, not to speak in this connection of science

[1] *Philosophy of the Greeks*, ii. 1, p. 785.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 2 (3rd ed.), p. 609 ff., p. 351 ff.

and everything attaching to it. Now of course it does not immediately follow from this that knowledge as such is actually the highest thing there is for man. Yet it must be intelligible how that opinion arose among the most gifted people of antiquity, and through them gained boundless significance for our mental life down to the present day. And the permanent truth which in any case underlies it ought not to be misunderstood—the truth, viz., that by our intellect we are what we are, since everything that contributes to human dignity has in that faculty its intermedium and its indispensable condition.

But it is not enough for our purpose to rest in these general observations. We require to have a more exact conception of the relation which we are considering, *i.e.* of the form which it assumed in Greek philosophy. And here it will be convenient before going farther to set forth in brief and summary fashion a specific view on this question. A fuller treatment will then introduce the necessary qualifications and furnish proofs.

Now the principle of Greek philosophy which here falls to be considered is no other than the one already mentioned, viz., that man has to look for blessedness or the chief good in and through knowledge. For the answer thus given to the question of the chief good settles the relation of religion, science and morality to one another. There is directly implied in that principle as its leading feature an exceedingly close connection between religion and knowledge or science. According to it religious satisfaction must be sought in philosophy, and the apprehension of God must be

declared to be the knowledge which is properly and supremely worth striving for. Knowledge is the path to that chief good which is alone worthy of man; for all knowledge which is not itself the apprehension of God has the significance of being the ladder for reaching this highest knowledge, and therewith the possession of the chief good. Conversely knowledge on its side can only be completed in the highest apprehension, which is at once the perfection of knowledge and the loftiest practical aim of man. Religion can hardly be more closely bound up with knowledge than is here the case. But, farther, in this there is at the same time a crucial estimate of the moral life involved; it is implied that there is a stage in the realisation of human life which, as being higher and nobler, ranks above moral action in the concrete relations of daily life. And although in any individual case the effect does not by any means result as a matter of *necessity*, still a tendency is thus presented which *may* at any time assume a negative attitude towards man's ordinary moral life in its whole extent. But the two things, viz. that emphasis on knowledge in religion and this estimate of the moral life, are very closely connected with each other. Owing to its significance for religion knowledge has this unequalled value. And because of its relation to knowledge religion is farther removed from the rest of the concerns of life; in particular, it becomes a higher grade of existence, one which ranks above the active life of the world. Lastly, in regard specially to the relation of religious faith to science, the distinction between the two does not in this

connection appear at all in consciousness. To speak more correctly, it has no existence at all for such a mode of thought. Here it holds true that science is completed in religious knowledge, because all science paves the way to this goal, and that knowledge is thus the only adequate form of religious truth.

At the outset a qualification must be added to what has been said. For, speaking strictly, notwithstanding all the emphasis laid on knowledge, the interest peculiar to science in the exact investigation of the real world does not have justice done to it in this connection. But undoubtedly philosophy desires to satisfy this interest likewise. In like manner where there is a sound and vigorous national life, man's moral interest in such concrete relations as are inherent in the family, the state, and people's vocation in the world, makes a clamant demand for independent consideration—a demand which must likewise be regarded by philosophy. We shall farther consider it not as a defect but as a merit if a philosophical system seeks to satisfy demands which are warranted in both these senses. But where these interests are asserted independently and energetically, the supreme religious and philosophical point of view, as it appears in the combination described above, cannot fully attain its sovereign rank. Still even in that case this combination remains as the basis—so long as the aim of philosophy continues to be directed to Unity and Totality. Then that is shown by the fact that such a system contains unsolved contradictions.

With this reservation, then, that manifold deviations from the rule occur owing to what was last mentioned,

we may doubtless hazard the assertion that it is the combination of religion, science and morality just set forth, which from the time of Plato was established in Greek philosophy. Neo-Platonism in bringing this same combination to maturity, marked the outcome of the whole development. It did so in this way, that the religious character of philosophy was directly emphasised, and the completion of it was sought in revelations of the Godhead. This together with all that is connected with it belongs distinctly to the later time. It must be explained by the predominance of the religious interest in that later period, against which the scientific and ethico-political interests could no longer prevail. But the basal thought just described is itself Greek, as Zeller too shows in forming the conclusion that we ought not to over-estimate the foreign influences concerned in the origin of these later movements, that in these what was principally exhibited was the consummation of a development long before set on foot in Greek thought.[1]

The related traits appear most plainly in Plato himself, with whose name this later movement connected itself. Above our ordinary intellectual acquaintance with things there rises according to him pure knowledge, which has as its object the truly existent—the Ideas and ultimately the Idea of the Good, which is identical with God.[2] This knowledge is at the same time æsthetic in its nature; yet we do justice to Plato's genius only if we recognise the religious point of view as supreme with him. But if the wise man

[1] *Philosophy of the Greeks*, iii. 2 (2nd ed.), p. 58 ff.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 1, p. 492 ff., p. 541 ff.

finds his chief good in this exaltation towards the truly existent, then in practice the common moral life cannot be the highest for him. Above it there stands devotion to true philosophy, from which he can sink down only on compulsion and by force of stern necessity to the practical activity of a citizen of the state.[1] At the same time certainly according to Plato the scientific and the ethico-political interests also demand their rights. Yet in his system the combination above described is plainly recognisable in all its characteristic features. And the true philosophic impulse which seeks unity must itself induce every one who enters on this line of thought, to draw the threads of that combination more tightly together than Plato himself has done.

The Aristotelian system may next be taken as affording a very typical example of one in which both science and the concrete moral life in their independent significance have been considered without regard to the leading thought. By aiming at the observation of the concrete and at the investigation of actual associations Aristotle became the father of science proper. And farther he esteems this empirical knowledge not merely as something subordinate and preparatory like Plato: he includes it as a branch of philosophy proper.[2] But this introduces an unsolved contradiction into his system, which finds expression in various ways. For example, in his allowing only the individual object to be substance, and still saying that the general merely is the object of true or of the highest knowledge.[3] Or

[1] *Philosophy of the Greeks*, ii. 1, p. 735 ff.
[2] *Ibid.* ii. 2, p. 161 ff.
[3] *Ibid.* ii. 2, p. 304 ff.

in the other fact that the thought of God as the pure contemplation of himself, as the unmoved Mover of the universe, is the final thought of his system, and yet he does not succeed in actually deriving the variously articulated world from this supreme principle. For it cannot amount to such a derivation when he teaches that matter experiences a *yearning* to be determined by form, and that motion is thence originated.[1] That seems much more like a religious and mythological thought than a scientific explanation. But what is at the root of these irregularities in the system of the great master of the art of thinking, who for centuries directed the paths of scientific research? Simply this that the specially scientific interest swayed his mind, that he adhered at the same time to the primary religious and philosophical thought of the Platonic system, but was unable to solve the insoluble problem of actually reconciling the two positions. Indeed he not merely adhered to that primary thought, but with his usual consistency of thinking brought it to its issue. For the transcendence of God is still more strongly emphasised by him than by Plato, and exaltation to pure thought still more unequivocally extolled as the highest aim.

This brings us to his practical philosophy, and it is the same with it as with the theoretical. On the one hand it is actual fact true to experience that interests Aristotle in ethics. Here too as a consequence he extended the knowledge of the subject, viz. human concerns, on every side. As a result he was moved even to oppose directly the one-sided emphasis laid on

[1] *Philosophy of the Greeks*, ii. 2, p. 351 ff.

knowledge in the sphere of virtue. And as he rejects the Platonic doctrine of ideas, he knows nothing of the ideal Republic of his teacher. In place of it he makes the actual state the object of his reflection, the conditions of its existence, and its prosperous continuance, and sums up the teaching of experience in wise counsels. Still, pure thought continues with him to be the highest exercise of man, that in which he finds his blessedness. And if we would reduce the view of practical life which Aristotle represents to a *unity*, we would have to consider the active life of the world with all its arrangements as means in the last resort for supplying to as many as are able to share in it the leisure which is requisite for a life devoted to thought. There is moreover a tendency in this direction shown by Aristotle when he decides for peace (not war) as the aim of the state, because peace is presupposed in such a theoretical course of life.[1] However, we shall be more accurate if we refrain from evolving this generalisation by a bold stroke, and gather the meaning of Aristotle's doctrine from his emphasising the independent worth of active life in a connection in which it can have only a subordinate position assigned to it. That is nothing else than the counterpart which ethics presents to the contradictions of theoretical philosophy; the cause, too, is in both cases the same, only in the one instance the scientific interest is concerned, in the other the concrete moral life. Among the followers of Aristotle the above-mentioned threads of connection were again drawn tighter by Eudemus, when he expressly declared the

[1] *Philosophy of the Greeks*, ii. 2, p. 682 ff.

knowledge of God to be the most essential element of human bliss, and estimated the value of all knowledge according to its significance for this supreme end.[1]

Of the systems that succeeded Aristotelianism, that of the Stoics attained the greatest significance. From us, too, it demands special consideration, as some of its fundamental notions exerted such a substantial influence on ecclesiastical theology and dogma. But it cannot be immediately brought under the point of view here maintained. Apparently, indeed, it contradicts it, in so far as it pronounces virtue and not knowledge to be the true good. Yet on closer examination some of the characteristic features may be discovered here as elsewhere. It is significant to begin with, that in the Stoa the whole of philosophy has a practical purpose ascribed to it. This proves that the Stoics intended still less than Plato and Aristotle to pursue the purely scientific interest as that which is supreme in philosophy. Farther, the wise man of the Stoics, especially in the older school, exhibits the traces of a contemplative ideal. For him freedom from passion must rank as the highest goal which he can and ought to reach. And the more one aspired to live up to the Stoic principles, the more distinctly must alienation from the active life of the world have been involved; and if among large classes of their supporters that did not occur, that is only one of the inconsistencies mentioned at the outset. Above all, the connection between science and religious faith is maintained here also. Physics leads up to theology; and without doubt it is

[1] *Philosophy of the Greeks*, ii. 2, p. 874 ff.

understood as a matter of course that the knowledge of God forms the consummation of the scientific interpretation of the world. Thus, *e.g.*, the belief in Providence always relates to the world as a whole, not to the individual occurrence, whereas for piety this application to the individual occurrence is the main concern. Here again, then, essential elements of the primary conception are found, and just such as are of special moment for us.

Nevertheless in Stoicism the fundamental thought itself is missed, viz., the accentuated estimate of knowledge. This fact is decidedly connected with the other circumstance, that here philosophy does not stop with being a matter for the schools, but becomes influential in larger circles. For not only the variety in the endowments of individual human beings, but also the constraint of the natural circumstances of life, implies that the cultivation of knowledge which has been spoken of can only become the specialty of a comparatively small number of select people. Even thus the Stoic ideal still bears enough of this aristocratic character in itself. But it came to be of great significance, even for dogma, that in the Stoa philosophy began to be popularised, and consequently sought and found connection with the religious faith of the masses.

Then, as we come farther down, eclectic movements gained the upper hand, a fact which is also doubtless connected with the popularising of philosophy in the Stoic and Epicurean schools. But in this Eclecticism two currents may be distinguished. The one bears the character of an intellectual and moralising renais-

sance: into this the Stoic system debouches, in so far as it does not, as has just been shown, terminate in the fundamental conception here discussed. The other directly meets the Neo-Platonic ideal. I shall return at a later stage to this distinction.

Here we are interested first of all in the consummation of the whole development in the Alexandrian philosophy. For the designation may be understood as having that width of range. The earlier movement of the Alexandrian philosophy represented by Philo accords with Neo-Platonism on the general question which concerns us here. In both of them the threads of the combination set forth at the outset are finally drawn tight; philosophy simply falls over into religion. And whatever we may have to say against the representatives of this type of thought, we cannot deny them the credit of having brought the mental life of the Greeks to its final issue on *one* side, holding as they did that in knowledge lies the dignity as well as the blessedness of men, that all knowledge prepares for an advance to the highest subject, which alone in the last resort is worthy of knowledge, *i.e.* for the apprehension of God, and that this last is completed only where it is not simply theoretical knowledge, but above all an immediate contact of the knowing with the known. In other words, knowledge is completed in religion, in which also, as it is a means for securing the chief good, the highest practical aim of man is found, an aim to which he cannot apply himself without assigning a subordinate position to the active life of the world, and recognising the legislation of religion as supreme above that of morality.

This, then, is the combination of religion, science and morality which dominated the Idealistic philosophy of later antiquity. And the fact that this philosophy determined the *form* of dogma means nothing else than this, that ecclesiastical dogma arose in consequence of the implication of the Christian faith in that combination. But before we consider what is involved in this, and how far the import of the fact reaches, we must further supplement the foregoing analysis by the discussion of some points which are likewise of the greatest importance for the comprehension of dogma and of its relation to philosophy. In the front rank of these we have to place the *idea of the Logos*. Every one knows that the bond between faith and philosophy which was formed in the origin of dogma rests chiefly on the significance which the Logos idea acquired in the teaching of the church. We cannot therefore pass over that idea here. And it will be shown that it is connected in the closest manner with the very thought which we have now got to know as one which is fundamental in Greek philosophy. A second point will be dealt with in which our past discussion is still more particularly supplemented. The distinction just alluded to between two movements which may be discriminated in the Eclectic philosophy of later antiquity demands fuller treatment, because our comprehension of dogma, of its origin, but especially its farther development, depends on that among other things.

We have to do with a philosophy which is at the same time a religious and moral system of thought.

But such a philosophy must seek to establish *the relation existing between God, the world and man*, and derives its governing principle from the manner in which it defines that relation. For philosophy can take the place of religion only if it extends the knowledge of the world which it has to offer to the thought of God, and also defines man's relation to God in accordance with that knowledge. On the other hand, even apart from the religious point of view, it must discuss the position of man in the world and relatively to the world, so as to be able to announce the moral problem he has to solve and the ends which are set before him. In this, again, it will be guided by its knowledge of the manner in which God is related to the world and man. At least, if it is systematically wrought out, and if the clusters of ideas in it are organised into a unity, the answers which it gives to the questions which have been mentioned will not stand apart each one by itself, but will all be connected with each other. Naturally under these circumstances there will farther be an endeavour to search for *a single* idea, in order by starting with it to understand the whole as well as each particular. And it will be impossible that this idea can be any other than that which expresses the connection between God, the world and man. That is, however, the position which in many systems of later Greek philosophy is assumed by the Logos idea. It is its special characteristic to lie at their core, inasmuch as it expresses the understanding reached by them regarding the connection referred to.

This very Logos idea was specially adapted to

occupy such a position by its history within the sphere of Greek philosophy.[1] Even in one of the Pre-Socratic systems, viz. in Heraclitus, it appears in the fore-front. In the Logos Heraclitus recognises the connecting medium that binds together the natural world with its manifold elements. Only in consistency with the character of this stage of philosophy as natural philosophy it is by him identified with fire, *i.e.* a sensuous element. With the Stoics, too, the idea does not forbid this derivation from natural philosophy, these having employed it with special predilection. For them the Godhead is at once fire or warm fluid, and the Reason active in the world, the Logos. We might perhaps say the Logos is the spiritual principle of the world, only the spiritual even must be understood as a material existence of the highest rank. And this Logos which is active in the world is identical with the Godhead, just as Heraclitus, too, had already represented it as divine. Thus the notion has at the same time a religious significance. No less is the position of man in the world defined with the aid of the Logos idea. His position in the world, and relatively to the world, depends on this, that he, his soul, stands in a special relation to the Logos; it is a part of the universal Logos. So formerly according to Heraclitus, only here too he does not really get beyond the horizon of natural philosophy; whence, according to him, it may just as well be said that the soul is a part of the elemental fire, and is received by inhaling the dry

[1] Cf. Max Heinze, *Die Lehre vom Logos in der griechischen Philosophie*, Oldenburg, 1872.

air. But again the primary materialistic conception is spiritualised by the Stoics. According to their doctrine, the human soul is not merely pervaded like everything else by the universal Reason, but is itself a part of the Reason in the world. The distinctive nature and the dignity of man consist above all in the fact that he can know things, that he, on his spiritual side a part of the Logos, can know the things in which the Logos holds sway. But since the Logos is identical with the Godhead, this again has a directly religious significance. The world is full of divine forces, and man in his essence is kindred with God. Thus it is already found among the Stoics that the Logos idea has the sense above noted, viz., that it expresses the correlation of the Godhead, the world and man.

Above all is this the case according to Philo. And then in the form in which we find the idea in Philo, it was appropriated by the Christian theologians. Even if it is not made out that all those of them among whose theological principles we find the Logos idea knew and employed the writings of Philo, yet they all adopted the idea from contemporary philosophy, and in a form resembling what it has with him. Thus it may be asserted that we find the clearest expression given by him to what afterwards became a leaven in ecclesiastical theology. Still the basis of his Logos doctrine is the Stoic idea, but in such wise that it was fused with the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition. Inasmuch as Philo emphasised the transcendence of God, which had been taught particularly by Aristotle, still more strongly than the latter himself had done,

he arrived at an abstract opposition of God and the world, which did not permit the assumption of an immediate connection between them. Naturally, however, there must be such a connection somehow. Now, according to Philo, it is the Logos that establishes the connection between God and the world. In the view of the Logos entertained by him, however, the features of the Logos doctrine of the Stoics are combined with those of the Platonic doctrine of ideas. For if the Stoic Logos is the Godhead active in the world, and the Platonic world of ideas is the ideal world sublimated to the sphere of the divine existence, the truth of both statements is embodied in Philo's Logos. The relationship with the Platonic doctrine is also shown by the circumstance that the Logos of Philo is denominated both the supreme idea and the sphere of all ideas. In the Logos, according to his doctrine, the world is in God and God is present in the world, and both these truths in conjunction give us precisely the essence of the Logos; wherefore it is the mediator that interposes between God who is in Himself transcendent and the manifold world set over against Him. Presumably also the Old Testament faith in God cherished by Philo co-operated to form this combination of the trains of thought supplied by Greek tradition. For the pious man of the old covenant knows at once a God who is afar off and a God who is near. In this there might be special cause for Jewish thinkers who adopted the Greek philosophy to unite both the groups of ideas which have been spoken of. Be that as it may, however, at all events such a union is presented in the doctrine of Philo. But if the Logos is thus the con-

necting medium which combines God and the world, it is again with Philo just the Logos that determines the position of man in the world and with reference to God. The fundamental features of the Stoic Anthropology reappear with him, although clothed in Old Testament ideas and words. To know by means of the Logos the things in which the Logos holds sway, constitutes the dignity and portion of man. It is at the same time the way to God which lies open to him. He reaches the goal of his destiny in arriving by means of the Logos, in virtue of his original constitution, at union with God.

With all this we must not omit to mention that in the Logos doctrine of Philo there appears at the same time the mythological trait of later antique thought. It consists in this, that abstract notions are hypostatised and personified. Something of the kind may be noticed as early as Plato, only in his doctrine of ideas it is transfigured in the æsthetic sense. In the later philosophers it becomes mythology proper. And now the Logos doctrine of Philo itself shares that character when it represents the Logos as a sort of mediating being between God and the world. So regarded, it is the highest among those spirits known to the popular faith of the heathen as demons, and to Biblical faith as angels. It is not strictly a Person, but it is also not simply a spiritual principle; such an alternative is not known to Philo's thought. The Logos stands midway between the two; it is an abstract principle which the imagination personifies. On this account it is that in this doctrine of Philo the essentially mythological trait of later antique thought is concerned along with other elements.

Apart from this the significance of the Logos idea as in Philo and in those of kindred thought is no other than that mentioned above. It expresses the relation between God, the world and man, as they understand it. For that reason it is at the core of their thought. It is the answer arrived at by them to the weightiest question of every philosophy that means to be at the same time a religious and moral system of thought.

But we cannot rest satisfied with this interpretation of the Logos idea and of its significance. We want now to know farther how the knowledge it expresses is intellectually mediated, how the originators of it arrived at this answer to the question referred to. It is a characteristic of modern thought that we first take up all such questions and attack them where they are first presented, viz., in the human spirit. And so convinced are we of the accuracy of such procedure that we judge former theories as well by bringing them to the test of this derivation, that we are conscious of having understood them only when we have succeeded in deducing them from this source. But if we follow this course, we find there is nothing else whatever at the basis of the Logos idea than that combination of science, religion and morality with which we have already become acquainted as a basal thought of Greek philosophy.

The proper starting point for that general view of things which is characteristic of Idealism is always formed by man's consciousness of himself, by the manner in which he recognises according to their value the functions through which he knows himself, as spirit, and in which accordingly he determines the relation of

them to one another. But for the Greeks, or at least for those of them who ruled the mental life of the nation, thought, knowledge, took precedence of everything else. With them reason in this sense is not merely what establishes the distinctive dignity of man, but is what it consists of. This same reason they recognise in things, or in so far as they do not find it in them they condemn the world of experience as being a defective copy of the truly real or ideal world. In either case it is reason that distinguishes man, and which he has to seek in the world. And then there is already implied in this the other fact that reason is divine or is the Godhead itself, that it is thought or knowledge which opens to man the way to the highest, to God, that by this power of reason dwelling in him he proves himself to be kindred with God. For what we find and experience in ourselves as the highest we put down at the same time as the power above the world, and as the eternal goal of our endeavours, *i.e.* as God. This estimate which man forms of himself, one which assigns the highest place to thought or knowledge, which in particular exalts it above the active life of the world, above man's concrete moral duties, as unconditionally higher—this and nothing else lies at the foundation of the Logos doctrine. Hence also in Philo specially all those indications may be noted which bear witness of this personal estimate, and not least the exaltation of the contemplative ideal of life above the life of the world with its common duties.

But the same thing may also be shown in another way. As to what unites God with the world, and how man again is placed in the world and relatively

to God, the Logos doctrine furnishes an explanation. But now we moderns know that we cannot or dare not begin with reflecting on this connection as one which is objectively given. We cannot take a step on this course without being called on to give account of the grounds we have for proceeding to speak at all of a God and of a real world, and to consider our relation to the former and our position in the latter. Before, therefore, we ask about God, we must be clear on the point what it is that impels us, that impels men, to believe in a God, and what accordingly language about God means. And again, before we speak of a real world and discuss its relation to God, we must examine the means by which we become certain of the reality of the world, and thence infer what there is in this reality. That with all this, man, his relation to God and his position in the world, will not be forgotten, is already guaranteed by his being regarded to begin with as the subject of religion and knowledge. But the consideration of human things becomes complete only when the point of view of morality as incumbent on man also receives full attention. Or, in other words, if we want a philosophy which can at the same time regulate the life of its adherents and offer them the loftiest points of view whence to judge things in general, we cannot begin with conceiving thoughts about the relation of God, the world and man to one another. Before that is possible, we must settle how the case stands with regard to the relation of religion, science and moral life to one another. It is this question that lies at the basis of the other, and which has always lain at the basis of it. The answer to it

must take precedence and has always been the critical matter. But from this too it follows that with reference to the origin and significance of the Logos idea the position is no other than that indicated above.

We must farther notice the sort of ideal of religion that is associated with the systems of thought which are governed by the Logos idea. It is, then, no other than that of mystical natural religion, which we became acquainted with in our former studies, and as to which we found then even, that it influenced the origin of Catholic Christianity and of its dogma.[1] In fact we

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 71 ff., and p. 362 ff. In the second century of our era the universal Catholic religion arose out of original Christianity. This far-reaching transformation is based on a change in the guiding idea of the Chief Good, a change accomplished through the fusion of Christianity with the intellectual life of the Græco-Roman world. For, as it may be pretty frequently observed that where there is a high development of civilisation and a surfeit of it, religion becomes Mysticism and retirement from the world, becomes what was previously described (note to p. 8) as spiritualised Natural Religion, something similar also occurred in later antiquity. When, therefore, this world of expiring antiquity appropriated Christianity with the intellectual means at its disposal, a fusion such as we have spoken of, a fusion of Christianity with spiritualised mystical Natural Religion had to take place. Thence arose Catholicism. The Christian idea of the Chief Good, which establishes the unity of Religion and Morality, is so far displaced, that mystical union with the Godhead and the asceticism that flies the world are aspired to as the chief goal of man, and moral activity is only estimated as the indispensable condition certainly, but yet a merely *external* condition, of future blessedness. The historical revelation of God is converted into a complex of supernatural facts, from which are derived the partly sensuous, partly supersensuous, means of grace wielded by the church (the sacraments). In place of the kingdom of God there comes the universal spiritual monarchy of the church. All depends on one's living in this church and participating in its sacraments. There is no Christianity except within the embrace of the supernatural institutions of the church. And there is no conviction as to Christian truth except through subjection to the church and obedience to it. For since by supposition the Chief Good is purely transcendental, passing beyond reason and the natural powers of the human mind, we cannot

meet with all the essential features of that ideal of religion in late Greek philosophy. We find not merely the preference for the contemplative ideal of life to which there was frequent allusion, but even the

count on the free obedience of faith, which recognises and experiences in revelation the completion of reason. And since in the mystical ideal of religion that was referred to there is nothing that binds the individual to revelation, his emancipation from revelation must be prevented by the requirement of blind obedience. Hence the authority of revelation becomes rigid, external, and can be nothing else. In short, all the essential features of the Catholic form of Christianity can be derived from that displacement towards the side of mystical Natural Religion which was mentioned. And this because everything whatever that the representatives of the Catholic Church most distinctly emphasise as Christian presents itself as indispensable indeed, if Christianity must be maintained under the primary false supposition. That applies also in particular to everything that we Protestants reject in Catholicism as being contrary to the gospel. From this it may best be seen that in this explanation of Catholicism the essence of the matter has been reached. Then Protestantism is nothing but the restoration of original Christianity in opposition to this Catholic distortion. In particular, the original unity of Religion and Morality which is founded on the gospel is again vindicated and realised in and by Protestantism. Thus the ideal of life becomes different. The Word of God, conformably to the spiritual and moral character of the Chief Good, becomes the most conspicuous means of salvation, whereas the sacraments pass into the background. Faith and Faith alone appears as the channel by which salvation must be accepted. The authority of revelation comes to be inwardly established, an authority to be recognised by the free obedience of Faith, etc. But it has to be noted that an opposition to Catholicism is possible which strikes not merely at the Catholic distortions of Christianity, but at the latter itself. It is rooted in the foreign ideal of religion, from the fusion of which with Christianity Catholicism arose. It is the enemy within its own walls, against whom the Catholic system endeavours to guard itself in every way. Such an opposition to Catholicism was not contemplated by the Reformation. But it did form an element of the contemporary fanatical movements, especially those of the Anabaptists. That impelled the Reformers forthwith to seek closer connection once more with the traditional ecclesiastical system and dogma. Hence Protestantism is still entwined in many ways with its past in Catholicism. On the other hand, even in Protestantism many a later phenomenon can be understood from that opposition to Catholicism which itself clings to Catholic ground. That applies, for example, although in very different ways, to Pietism and to many modern so-called liberal currents in Protestantism.

panegyric on mystical union with God as the highest attainable goal for men, and the corresponding estimate of man's concrete moral duties. We find this in Philo, and above all among the Neo-Platonists. The Pantheistic faith too is not wanting. It is implied in the Logos idea as such, in the bond of union between God and the world which it furnishes. That, indeed, is also the unmistakable meaning of that idea among the Stoics. And by the fusion which took place with the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition this fact is not altered. As the Logos gathers from this circumstance the richer significance that it is not merely the Godhead that holds sway in the world, but as the totality of ideas is at the same time the ideal world posited in the Godhead, the connection established by it between God and the world only approximates all the more towards the union of the two in the Pantheistic sense. Not as if even the doctrine of Philo, like the later form of Alexandrian philosophy represented by Neo-Platonism, should be explained as Pantheism. The Biblical faith in God especially may have prevented him from giving that turn to his doctrine. Nothing at all is gained for knowledge by our including the definite phenomenon under such a general category. I have not ventured to omit mentioning this relation of the Logos idea to the Pantheistic faith, simply because it is not without significance for the comprehension of the succeeding development, and of its latest phases in particular.

But now, if it has appeared from this study of the Logos idea that it expresses the combination of religion, science and morality which was previously discussed,

and if, on the other hand, it is certain that no other philosophical idea is equal in significance to the idea of the Logos in ecclesiastical theology and for that theology, there is in this an important confirmation of the proposition with which we commenced; the influence of philosophy on dogma consists in the fact that theology implicated the Christian faith in that combination of religion, science and morality which was found ready to hand.

It has already been stated above that in the philosophy of later antiquity two different movements appeared, and that we cannot avoid considering the difference between the two for our purpose (p. 50). But we are not concerned to give an exact account of these forms of human philosophising as definite historical phenomena of the period to which they belonged, in order by this means to extend or correct historical science. They must rather be characterised only in their general nature and with reference to their origin in the human mind. For this is what our undertaking requires, as will appear particularly in the farther course of our studies.

Both movements were originally of an eclectic nature. Then at a later date the one engendered in the Alexandrian philosophy a new and peculiar system, while the other remained an eclectic popular philosophy. But the difference between the two applies both to the method that is employed and to the practical thinking which gains expression in them. To put the matter briefly, the one may be designated a speculative mystical movement, the other a rationalistic moralising

movement founding on common experience. Let us speak of the latter first.

In order to realise the connection of things and events, we make use in daily life of the notions of Cause and Purpose most of all. Scientific research too has always made use of those two categories, although it has an inherent tendency to prefer the notion of Cause. The circumstance that common as well as scientific knowledge adopts this course, proves that this procedure is dictated by the facts. It responds in both cases to the purpose of knowledge, to the intentions we pursue with regard to it. The result, on which all depends so decidedly here, justifies the procedure; here then the matter will rest, so long as people concern themselves with the knowledge of things. But now in both cases one has to do in the first place with the knowledge of individual things or occurrences as the case may be, and their connection, or at all events with special departments of the actual world, not with the knowledge of the universe, or the sum of things. Yet what is more natural than to extend this procedure which is so successful in special fields to the world as a whole? Where this is done, and experience is emphasised accordingly as the foundation of all knowledge, we are confronted with what is usually called an empirical philosophy. Such a philosophy has the reputation, and with the great mass of people will always maintain the reputation, of being *rational* in the eminent sense of the word. For it does nothing else but transfer to the whole the procedure which is familiar to every rational man in dealing with what is individual and which is objected to by

none in that case: just as in the other sphere, where we look to what is individual, the inquiry is now directed to the cause and purpose of the world as a whole. How then should that not appear rational in the proper sense of the word?

But manifestly this procedure leads quite naturally to ideas which are of a religious description. For if a cause of the world as a whole is sought for, it cannot be found in the world; in assuming such a cause, thought is feeling out beyond the world. The case is just the same with the purpose of the world; in the last resort it must reach beyond it. Of course this supreme cause and purpose which we assign for the world cannot be dissociated from the latter, but must stand in intimate connection with it. That is directly implied by the fact that it must be the cause and purpose of this actual world, with which as the object of study empirical thought as a whole sets out. But even though there is a connection with the world in divers ways, it is itself *something else than the world.* It is what religious faith calls the Godhead, which is also thought of as being always in a similar relation to the world; in it the existence of the world has its cause, and it is active in following out purposes in the world, even though it may be reserved for the higher forms of religious faith to elaborate such thoughts in a comprehensive treatment, and especially to seek the supreme purpose of the world in God Himself. Thus the empirical explanation of the world which we have mentioned, attains quite naturally a religious character. The faith founded on it seems to be of the kind which is strictly rational. And no one will deny that there

is good reason for this, since it answers exactly again to the nature of common thought to represent God, or the cause and purpose of the world, as a Being separated from it and set over against it.

Man, too, with his peculiar endeavours and purposes, is a part of the actual world, and no comprehensive philosophical theory can refuse to devote special consideration to that circumstance. But as the view of the world just mentioned results without violence from the daily experience of the rational man, and appears to be founded in the most satisfactory manner on it, so too in reference to *practice*, a mode of thought is derived from common experience, which, within its own sphere, asserts the claim with equal urgency to be that which is rational in the proper sense. In the first place, it is an understood thing among men that they want to be happy, that their happiness, their welfare, is the highest aim, or at least one of the highest aims, which they pursue. That is nothing affected or unreal, but a perfectly natural wish of every living man implied in life itself. Individual men, it is true, understand something very different by the happiness which they are all striving after, but language assists them in coming to an understanding with each other, by supplying them with the general term—happiness, or a term like it—by which they can all describe that object of theirs. And even though innumerable misunderstandings arise, from the circumstance that the individual imputes *his own* wishes to others, supposes them to exist in others also as a matter of course, still the general word has a good meaning, seeing that in the case of every person the thought of the

fulfilment of *his own* endeavours and wishes is associated with it.

Scarcely less common among people whose sphere of life belongs to history is the other fact, that they come to have moral experiences of some sort. Conscience raises its voice in their breast. However different its declarations to individuals may be, that we ought to do one thing and avoid another, that this is commanded and that forbidden—of this all people are aware: he who by any device or violence silences this voice within himself, renounces the highest thing there is in man. And now this is generally connected with what was mentioned in the former paragraph in that particular manner which is described by the notions of punishment and reward. This appears to be due to the fact that the moral life arises by indirect influence in education. It has its permanent ground in the fact that the thought of guilt or of violated duty always brings up in the ingenuous man the other thought of merited punishment. Thus there arises a practical type of thought which has been and may be designated *legal Moralism.* It prevails most widely among men, is a fundamental element of all moral life, a type of thought which corresponds so closely to the facts of the natural and common consciousness, that, as stated, it can assert the claim to rank in the sphere of practice as the type which is rational in the strict sense.

Here again the connection with religion appears in a natural way. The God in whom a man possessing such a moral constitution believes, is the supreme guardian of moral institutions. Indeed, these are regarded as the expression of His own holy will. It is

He who in the final hall of judgment holds reward and punishment in His hand. But if that is so, He has at the same time power over the welfare of man, over him as a part of the world, and therefore over the world itself as the totality of the conditions on which his life depends. That then is the point where the above-mentioned theoretical view of the world and this practical type of thought meet, and as it were mutually call for each other. Together they form a whole, a general theory, in which knowledge, faith, and the government of life are united. Originally the product of eclectic philosophy, this general theory may yet pass for something *independent* and *peculiar*. Above all, it is no accident that these particular elements have met and that they form a whole together. It all corresponds, each feature in its own way, to the habits of thought and life which are impressed in daily and common life on the rational man.

If this rationalistic moralism is to be the end of the matter, we must not raise the question as to what *the true happiness* of man consists in. And it does not require to be raised. Most people regard it as self-evident that happiness is just happiness, and that every one knows what he must understand by it. And it is not meant for a moment that a mean conception of this happiness *must* be associated with such an avowal, and that therefore a low and worthless Eudæmonism *must* be the issue. Still it will be impossible, on the whole and in the long run, to avoid raising the great cardinal question—*In what does the true happiness, the chief good, of man consist?* But if it is asked, the answer on the religious side, if we

entirely disregard the specialties of Christianity, will always be to the effect that it consists in the knowledge of God. For participation in the divine life, in which all the adherents of religion at the stage which alone comes into consideration here recognise their goal, is attained, as being spiritual fellowship, through the medium of knowledge. And so the precise statement that participation in the divine life consists in the knowledge of God, appears the most suitable. This knowledge may then be understood in a more practical or a more theoretical sense; in the former case answering to religion, in the latter to philosophy. But thus the point is reached where the rationalistic moralising movement passes over to the speculative mystical. And now it is true that the connection described above may be completely broken up by this new element, although this does not necessarily happen, and although a combination of the two factors is quite conceivable, and has often actually occurred.

But in itself the speculative mystical movement of thought is of quite a different nature from the first-named popular movement. Even the method in which it works is quite different. Experience is at most its preliminary starting-point, never its principle. With its adherents, experimental knowledge is equivalent to mere pictorial thought and opinion, is held to be shifting, inconstant and accidental, like experience itself. It seeks *true* knowledge, and true knowledge has only the general, the permanent and truly existing, as its object. As to its essential principle, it can never disown its affinity with the ideas of Plato, that Coryphæus of all speculative philosophy. The principle,

I might say, always consists of general ideas, intuitions, or notions, which, whether they are viewed more in their religious or in their æsthetic or in their logical aspect, extend beyond the world of experience, so that if one starts with them, all that exists, and consequently this actual world, may be conceived and understood, while they themselves are impressed on the human mind with inherent necessity. But how this school, like the other, is connected with religion, what is the particular bond of union in its case, and what kind of results that connection produces both as regards the place of religion in the economy of man's mental life and the estimate which is formed of moral action—all this I do not require to go into here again. On that subject enough has been said in what was previously set forth.

The two movements are by no means opposed to each other, but stand to each other in a relation of close affinity. Especially are they at one in their opposition to all Scepticism or Sensualism, and are only different forms of one and the same Idealistic type of thought. It is no less true that there are definite points of contact between them. If empirical philosophy starts with things as given, still it can be completed only in and through the fact that it reaches out beyond all that is given. One cannot apply the Categories of Cause and Purpose to the world as a whole, cannot do so in the precise way in which common rational thought operates, without positing and assuming something outside the world. And it is just this Being outside or above the world—the Godhead — that passes in the speculative school for

the truly existent, for the highest and final object of all knowledge. Conversely, the latter cannot avoid establishing a connection somehow between its general ideas or intuitions and the given world. But for this purpose again there are no other means at its disposal than the Categories of common thought, above all those of Cause and Purpose. It is just the same in the field of practice: Moralism cannot do without some idea or other of blessedness; and Mystical thought will, as a rule, allow a place of some sort, however subordinate, even for moral purposes which are secular and worldly. The two systems pass into each other and may be combined in many ways. What distinguishes them most definitely is a more superficial characteristic. It is this, viz. that in the one case we have popular statements level to all minds, in the other speculative statements which are wont to be a matter for the schools and, especially if they have a religious character over and above, to pass current in the first instance as a sort of esoteric doctrine.

It would not be correct to describe Aristotle in a word as the originator of empirical philosophy, as we describe Plato as the originator of speculative philosophy. Rather have we seen that Aristotle holds firmly to the fundamental thought of the Platonic philosophy, and on his part, quite like his teacher, regards the general as the proper object of true knowledge. So too this derivation would not be historically just, as the eclectic popular philosophy which has been mentioned is referable not so much to Aristotelian, as above all to Stoic, sources. However, in view of what follows, it cannot really be

denied that, as Plato is undoubtedly the father of speculation and philosophical mysticism in the West, so the influence of Aristotle leads thinkers to start with the given world, and thus promotes empirical rationalistic thought. The interest in the knowledge of what is individual and the interest in man's concrete moral life, which co-operated in determining the philosophy of Aristotle (p. 46), tell in that direction. And thus there actually is a connection here. One will venture all the more readily to assert that, as the two modes of thought are not at all opposed to each other, any more than are Plato and Aristotle themselves.

And now, in what has been said, we have given a sufficient account of the two branches of the Idealistic philosophy of later antiquity. As we now pass from these preliminary observations to consider the origin of dogma itself, we shall immediately discover the significance even for theology of the difference that obtains between them. That significance will be fully apparent to us while in the following chapters we trace the further development of ecclesiastical theology.

The fact that philosophy determined the *form* which Christian truth assumed in dogma served as the starting-point of our study. What has now been set forth should serve to explain this fact. True, it now follows at once from what we have learned, that it does not do to restrict the influence exercised by philosophy to the determination of the form, that it rather extends most decidedly to the *matter* and *content* as well. Still it will not be possible to take another meaning out of the facts than that exhibited above: the truth

that philosophy decides regarding the form signifies nothing else than that the relation posited in it between religion, science and morality, became determinative; and it is just with this circumstance that the influence it gained in the matter is associated. Whoever will not allow that the truth mentioned *must* invariably have the meaning here assigned — and that might indeed seem too wide an inference —will yet be unable to make any objection to the hypothesis that such was the case in the present instance. Then the confirmation of this hypothesis results naturally from what is historically established. The whole literature of the early church bears testimony to its truth. The most conspicuous threads in the texture of the theology that was forming were spun as the result of the introduction of the Christian faith into the combination alluded to, and the weightiest dogmas again sprang from the theological activity which was put forth under these conditions.

And who can fail to see that that was not an accidental result of circumstances then and there existing, one which might also have turned out differently, that in what concerns this process we must rather speak, if we can do so anywhere, of *historical necessity?* In order to strike root in the educated world of Greece and Rome—and without doing that it could not fulfil its vocation in universal history—Christianity had to accommodate itself to the intellectual life existing in that world. Not as if that was done intentionally or even consciously. It resulted quite spontaneously. Very soon the church had no other officials whatever except such as them-

selves shared the presuppositions of antique life. But how were these men to adopt Christianity if not by arriving at an understanding of it with the aid of the intellectual means which lay at their disposal? How were they to impart it to others if not just in the way in which they had understood it themselves, and in which alone it could be intelligible to the others also? And lastly, how would it be conceivable that in this development form and content were kept strictly separate, that only the form was derived from the intellectual life which already existed, while the whole content proceeded from the new evangel? That is not the course of things in real history. The gospel certainly transforms those who accept it in faith into new men. But it does so by acting as a leaven in the old existing mass, and in such a way that the results that follow are something relatively new—in our case the form which Christianity first assumed in the educated world of antiquity, and which it had to assume there. It is therefore not surprising—the issue is simply self-evident—if, as is the case, the dogma which arose there is not a pure expression of the Christian faith, but *the Christian faith intimately combined with the intellectual content of antique life, and expressed in the intellectual forms of that life.*

But it ought not to be understood farther, that when we give prominence to this fact any condemnation of the Christianity of the early church is intended. Nothing indeed could be more senseless than such a judgment on past generations. Besides, it would not accord with the truth. We must always keep before us the fact

that it was not possible at all to maintain primitive Christianity unchanged, in its first and original form, because that form was determined by the expectation of the *early* return of Christ and the *approaching* end of the world. The transition to new forms was so effected, however, in the sphere of doctrine, that those who took over the philosophical elements, in the first instance pretty much unchanged, into Christian theology, were still dominated in their personal Christianity by the motives of the oldest church, and that with the necessary gradual disappearance of those motives a hearty appropriation of the philosophical ideas and a real saturation of them with the Christian faith took place. This strikes us forcibly if we compare the Logos doctrine of the Apologists with the Christology of an Irenæus and an Athanasius. At the most we may perhaps say of Clement and Origen, that the one truth is no longer applicable, and the other not yet in its entirety. But then they again indicate a necessary stage of the development in the advance from the Apologists and Anti-Gnostic Fathers to Athanasius and his successors. Here there is nothing to censure or even to bring to judgment. Above all, will he not think of any such thing who reflects that Christianity is and remains an ideal never *completely* realised. Every great epoch of the church has depicted that ideal in its own fashion and attempted the realisation of it. There is certainly room for the possibility that an interpretation of the ideal which was compromised by non-Christian influences was associated with a fuller realisation of it than that combined with the purer and sounder interpretation in vogue at a

later time. On such a matter we do not presume to judge. Just as little of course must we allow ourselves to be withheld by our well-grounded aversion to such a judgment from examining the earlier forms and embodiments of Christianity, and settling what sources they proceeded from. What we criticise is not men's personal Christianity in that age of Christendom, but the interpretation and conception of Christianity of which its representatives give evidence. But to do that, and to become clear as to any errors that may be intermingled with their ideas, is not so much a right as a duty of evangelical theology. Our rejection of it would serve to compromise that better interpretation of our religion which we owe to the Reformation.

However, these are strictly considered self-evident matters. They could not be passed by, because many are disposed to interpret the prominence we give to the fact that dogma arose from an alliance of the Christian faith with Hellenism as a mere trampling on history resulting from subjective motives. It required to be said, on the contrary, that anything but such procedure is meant or implied by what we have asserted.

After these general observations, let us now look at the particulars, so far as they have to be considered for our purposes.

And here only little need be said as to the coincidence of some important articles of the Christian faith with the popular system of philosophy depicted above.[1] The points of contact between them lie on the surface. If the latter can speak of God as the first cause of the world and of all things, this is met by the

[1] Cf. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. p. 372 ff. (2nd ed., p. 413 ff.).

Christian's faith in God as the Almighty Creator. If, again, Christianity rests on the faith that a living divine Providence rules over all occurrences great and small and makes them subserve a supreme purpose, nothing was so familiar to the other type of thought as the idea of the omnipotent πρόνοια of the divine Logos or of the Godhead itself. In moral questions too there was a similar affinity. The thought of the moral law and of its holy majesty founded on the divine will is an inalienable thought of the Christian religion, just as, on the other hand, it prevails in philosophical Moralism. And if we look to the content of that law, the sublimated morality of the later Stoa, bearing as it did the impress of universalism, answered to the Christian principle of love to all mankind. From the standpoint of the Christian faith we may conclude that that morality which sprang up in noble minds on the ground of the imperial world of Rome, a world that drew the nations into one, is one of the fairest blossoms of the general revelation of God. Lastly, the belief in Retribution, which imparts to this morality its legal impress, is in itself by no means unknown to Christianity, but subject to the condition that the Christian conception of blessedness, of eternal reward and eternal punishment, is maintained, is an inalienable constituent of Christian piety. With this real intrinsic affinity between the two spiritual currents, what was more natural than that, as soon as they met in the philosophers who were converted to Christianity, they were closely united and flowed on in *one and the same* channel? So in fact it happened: the Apologists of the second century are the representatives of that union,

and for us their writings are the evidences of it, and to all appearance it was accomplished without demur and without being opposed or distrusted in any quarter.

Not, however, as if the Christian representatives of this wide-spread learning, with all that it had in common with what they formerly knew and prized, did not feel themselves as Christians at an entirely new standpoint, and had not actually reached it too. For if what *in general* constitutes the Christian is his feeling certain of a divinely communicated verity, and the fact that he has his standing-ground for judging everything in a chief good which is not of this world, we meet with these characteristics of Christianity in the Apologists in particular, as the proper efficient forces which ruled their feeling and activity. Though we may find the reasons to be insufficient with which they set forth the certainty of a truth not humanly excogitated but divinely guaranteed, yet we will not and cannot fail to see that it is the confidence of Christian faith that finds expression in their proclamation of that certainty. And if their Legal Moralism does not appear to us to be the pure fruit of the Gospel, and if their faith in Retribution sometimes employs the language of the vindictive Psalms of the Old Testament, yet we shall have to acknowledge that in the case of most of them there are not wanting expressions of the genuine unworldly feeling of the Christian. Also as regards morality there are not wanting indications of the new position which as Christians they have reached. They themselves regard the injunction of love for one's enemies as something distinctive of Christian morality. And above all there

is the other fact that the injunctions of morality, even those inculcating the strictest temperance, are carried into effect in their church, and are not merely admired and made matter for declamation.

The alliance between faith and reason which was thus formed now gave no slight impulse to the spread of Christianity. It was not least the Apologetic interest that suggested it, and it principally served the purpose of Apologetics. We shall also have to conclude that the compact is necessary, so long as the reason with which faith is here united finds *general recognition as reason.* In like manner it may be held that the practical significance and effect of the articles of faith which come into consideration here are not necessarily compromised when these are formulated in this philosophic fashion. The Christian, it is true, will derive his confident faith in Providence, if he really attains it, not from general considerations, but from the love of God assured to him through Christ. But it is also true that he will not be hindered from the exercise of that faith if, treading in the steps of contemporary thought, he believes he can apprehend and prove with the reason what his faith offers him as the vivifying power of his feeling and action. Both have been found thoroughly compatible in the case of many of the best Christians even of the Evangelical Church. Hence that alliance between faith and reason which was struck in the earliest days of theology must not be interpreted without hesitation as implying a curtailment of the Christian faith. Here it rather appears that it was really faith that supplied the content and that philosophy contributed nothing but the form.

And yet there remain two things, viz. the Christian faith and what that philosophising theology made out of it. Here too in the altered form there is involved at the same time an alteration of the matter. One can be confidently aware of this, if one compares, *e.g.*, the Christian faith in Providence with the reflection which lies at the foundation of the Teleological argument for the existence of God, and which forms a main constituent of Rational Theology. For on a closer view it is found that what seem at first sight to be so closely akin and so similar, are in truth fundamentally distinct things. Rational thought starts with the purposeful order presented in the world; on finding in that world ends and means working into each other, even where there exists no consciousness in things themselves and no will that proposes ends, such thought infers an intelligent, wise Creator and Disposer of all things; it is the peculiar essence of this species of thought, that it understands and can interpret the means acting in particular cases, whereas it becomes uncertain as soon as it attempts to reach completion through the knowledge of a supreme all-determining design. On the other hand, with the Christian's faith in Providence, it is exactly the reverse in all these respects. His starting-point is not the study of the world, but his certainty as to the divine love which chose him from eternity, and therefore so orders everything that it must serve for his highest good. It is not the Teleological connection *of things and events with each other* that he looks to; he refers everything to the purpose evinced in the *blessedness guaranteed to him.* In doing so he confesses that the

particular means which God employs are unknown to him, but avers that he is infallibly certain of their adaptation for that supreme and ultimate purpose. To put the matter briefly, what disturbs the Rational view which has been mentioned, if it does not threaten to upset it, seeming, as it does, to cross one's purposes, and to inspire terror, the Christian has not seldom recognised as the necessary means for securing his blessedness, and has praised God for it. Where it assumes this form, the difference between the two views alluded to is palpably apparent to every one who is willing to see it. And so after all it resulted farther that the combination of the two which was spoken of had consequences of a momentous character. What on the one hand gave an impulse to the spread of the Christian faith, on the other rendered it difficult to exhibit it in its purity. By this transmutation into a species of rational knowledge appealing to the intellect, that faith was farther parted from piety. Out of the πίστις of the New Testament there arises even here the *fides* of the Catholic creed. He who wishes to realise the fact that we must accordingly recognise in this issue the origin of a species of piety which is not that of the evangelical Christian, may compare together the way in which the *Catechismus Romanus* expresses itself on this article of the Christian faith, and what Luther has to say upon it in the large Catechism. The Catholic thinks that his relation to God, as it must rest on a living manifestation of God so far as it really determines his piety, is bound up with the supernatural institutions of the Church; that the divine government of the world is matter for secular knowledge such as is

attainable even by the unbeliever; that saints and angels fill up in no inconsiderable degree the gap thus arising in direct piety; and that the perfect Christian, the monk, has no farther need of any such supplement. The evangelical Christian, on the contrary, who aspires to render pure and unadulterated worship by the fulfilment of the divine commandments, amid the changes and vicissitudes of earthly things, cannot without harm dispense with a living faith in Providence—the fruit of saving faith—for a single day or a single hour. It is for him the indispensable means for seeing his way in this world with regard to the new life which he has gained through Christ, and for making everything earthly in very deed serviceable for the eternal purpose. Nothing is farther from his mind than the opinion that that faith expresses such knowledge as even unbelief or any person whatever is in a position to attain with merely intellectual means.[1]

But now the most important point after all is not this combination of the Christian faith with the popular wisdom of philosophy. It is true the conclusions which were thus formed had or acquired no slight significance for the whole of the system of dogma. They were destined to pass at a later time for the rational basis of ecclesiastical theology. And thus too their influence in part extends to the shaping of other dogmas of central significance, when, *e.g.*, the Legal Moralism associated with this thought, the conception of the moral order of the world which was dominated by it, gained a decisive influence upon the later ecclesiastical doctrine of the Atonement. But however im-

[1] Cf. *infra*, p. 97.

portant that fact is, these conclusions have really nothing to do directly with the fundamental idea that governs the whole of theology, and which is expressed in the doctrine of Salvation and the estimate of man corresponding to it. But now something of the same kind is true of these doctrines. In them too the influence of philosophy has asserted itself. And of course it is the speculative mystical species of thought that has to be considered here. It is now our further task to set forth the alliance of the Christian faith with it. Owing to the importance of the subject we must dwell somewhat longer upon it.

First of all, however, the remark may be made that in treating the sources separately we do not mean that the two are apportioned to different theologians and Church teachers, that one set of men sought connection only with the popular type of thought, while the others again took into consideration only the speculative mystical branch of philosophy. We rather find the two systems intermingled together by the same theologians. The Apologists, *e.g.*, who were described above as the fathers of the rational treatment of dogma, almost all employ at the same time the idea of the Logos, through which mainly the leading ideas of mystical speculation found their way into dogma. And, on the other hand, the chiefs and leaders of speculative theology, like Clement and Origen, took part with zeal in the defence of the Christian faith as to God and the world by an appeal to the accordant declarations of the philosophers. All that we can say on the matter is, that with regard to the total theological activity of any individual Church teacher it is the one or the other bent

that appears as determinative. But no one will therefore seek to deny that just as the difference between the two tendencies of thought exists in the abstract, so it came to be of significance for the development of dogma and of its history, and that it is doing justice therefore to the facts if we at once separate the two here and treat the one after the other. What forces itself most noticeably on our attention as the difference between the two series of elements entering into this process of fusion, corresponds to the difference brought out above between the two philosophical movements themselves, being the fact, viz., that the one, appealing as it does to large classes of people, is level even to ordinary reason, while the other appears as a subject for the schools, and is first cultivated in the narrower circle of the initiated. Thus, as I already mentioned, the rational conclusions of incipient Christian theology were formed as it were spontaneously: it is not hinted that any misgivings whatever with regard to them were roused within the Church. Speculative theology, on the other hand, prevailed only gradually and not without encountering opposition. And at first its representatives themselves did not by any means invariably understand their Gnosis to be for all and not simply for the enlightened. Clement, *e.g.*, in the Στρωματεῖς did not mean to work for all but only for a select circle. But then that position could not be permanently maintained in the Christian Church. At least it could not be maintained in principle. As a matter of fact, doubtless, the transformation of the Christian tenets into speculative *Theologoumena* must have withdrawn them farther from the mass of the faithful, and

made them the special property of the class of technically educated theologians. No essential harm was involved, because in the Catholic form of Christianity it is not so much faith as the worship corresponding to faith that constitutes the bond uniting the whole Church.

But now we proceed to look at the combination itself. Of it too it may be said that it was suggested by a close affinity between speculative mystical Gnosis and Christianity. Both have to speak of supramundane realities. And not merely that: both require people to take their stand upon these supramundane realities and thence to judge the world with all that it includes. For this also is true of the Christian faith, and properly of it alone. The knowledge of all things offered by it is in so far itself of a speculative nature, ruled, *i.e.*, by an idea which its possessor is inwardly certain of as the principle of all true knowledge, the knowledge which bears upon the essence of things. And the same close affinity is found, too, in their conception of the last and highest aim of man, and therefore in the sphere of practice. By the representatives of speculative philosophy as well as by the Christians, and by the latter as well as by the former, that aim is sought in God, and that always means at the same time that it is not sought in the world: whence an ascetic element naturally results in the ordering of the life. We cannot trace back the existence of the latter element in the conception and regulation of life which were in vogue in the early Church merely to the particular historical circumstances: it is rather in one form or another inalienable

from Christianity itself. Already, then, this close affinity between the two makes it seem thoroughly intelligible how a combination of them took place. To this must be added the fact that a fusion of Hellenic speculation with the Old Testament faith already existed in the Alexandrian philosophy. That this combination of Hellenism with Judaism was even in a higher degree than is generally supposed an important factor in the earliest history of Christianity and Christian theology, has recently been shown by Harnack in his *Dogmengeschichte*. Here we have to observe that there was furnished by that philosophy a speculation ostensibly derived from the Old Testament, the application of which to the Christian faith in order to exalt it in turn to Gnosis seemed to be positively requisite. Who could doubt under the circumstances that that result necessarily occurred, and that anything else was scarcely possible?

The outcome, now, of that process of fusion was nothing else than the Catholic religion and the Catholic creed. For there was contained at the same time in the speculation referred to an ideal of religion foreign to Christianity, that viz. of mystical Natural Religion. And from the commingling of that ideal with Christianity Catholicism arose. This process I formerly attempted to delineate and to establish in all its bearings.[1] Here we have to do with the theoretical side of this development, with dogma as such. *The question arises what the alteration consists in, which took place in consequence in the articles of the Chris-*

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 359 ff. (cf. note to p. 61 in this book).

tian faith. For that the faith experienced a transformation in consequence, that the Christian faith and the speculative mystical Gnosis which has been spoken of are still, in spite of their affinity, two *essentially* different realities—that may surely be regarded as a fact which does not require to be proved. Or, so far as a proof seems necessary, it will appear naturally as we follow up the question we have just raised.

It was stated above that in a philosophy which aims not merely at supplying a knowledge of the world, but also at being a religious and moral system of thought, the most important question concerns the relation that has to be assumed between God, the world and man, and that that idea which gives a solution of this question stands at the centre of the system. Something similar may be said of the Christian faith as well. Here too it is a critical question how the relation of God, the world and man to each other is to be understood. It is true that faith does not, like philosophy, take the world into consideration as an object of knowledge: Christianity aims just as little as any other religion at a knowledge of the world. Yet as in every religious system so also in that of Christianity the world does assume an important position, because it is the sum-total of the conditions on which the life of the pious person depends. How God, the world and man are related to each other is here too the most important question, and the idea respecting this matter is the thought regulative of faith.

Now it is understood at once as a matter of course that in a Christian system the *Person of Christ* must

occupy this commanding position. For in Him the perfected revelation of God is offered to the Christian; in Him faith has and recognises God. And as He thus determines the relation which appears in the Christian Church between God and man, so again it must be through Him that the relation of God to the world is recognised, since the idea of revelation decides on this matter, while Christ represents the consummation, the culminating point, of the revelation of God in the world. *In Him, therefore, every Christian system will have to realise the truth alluded to, the truth which is decisive for all else.* And this is the case in reality. Whether we look to the Christian faith as such, or to the system of ecclesiastical dogmas presented in theology, the Person of Christ stands in the one case as in the other at the centre of all thoughts and propositions enunciated about God, the world and man.

But then there comes again the question, *through what idea* is the Person of Christ, His appearance in the world, understood and interpreted? And if we consider this point, we light upon the distinction which obtains between the Christian faith and the ecclesiastical system of dogma. For it turns out that this idea which determines one's interpretation of the Person of Christ is different in the two cases: *in the Christian faith it is the idea of the Kingdom of God; in dogma it is the Logos idea.* The alteration which the Christian faith sustained as the effect of this philosophical or theological revision may consequently be described in this way: *the idea of the Kingdom of God was driven from the governing position, and in its place came the non-Christian and in so far heathen idea*

of the Logos. And the truth that that signifies in point of fact a far-reaching alteration in the tenets of Christianity, has now to be shown. At the same time, to obviate misunderstandings, I will not omit to recall the fact that the idea of the Kingdom of God attained ample realisation, especially in the Western world, through the growing Catholic Church, *i.e.* the universal Church, that which is independent of national distinctions, and that it was this Church with its institutions and its worship, much more than dogma and faith, that determined Christian piety down to the Reformation. The estimate which is given of dogma is not therefore intended to mean that the Church which engendered it within itself ought in consequence to be charged with falling away from the fundamental idea of Christianity. For us evangelical Christians certainly, who reject that Church with its institutions and its arrogant claim to be the Kingdom of God on earth, this position of matters only suggests the question all the more forcibly, whether among us a body of dogma can be accepted as final which in the Catholic form of Christianity (in connection with which it arose), in order to maintain its Christian character, counts on this supplementary aid which we reject. But this by the way. We have to show what were the consequences of the fact that the Logos idea became the regulative idea for dogma and for the theology attaching to it.

For this end the difference between the two ideas must first of all be somewhat more exactly explained; it must be shown that *the difference includes an opposition,* and in how far it does so. For if that

were not the case, the combination of the two ideas might be regarded as the issue which is to be desired, and which in ample measure satisfies all claims, both those of the Christian faith and those of human reason.

What decides as to our general view of things is the manner in which we dispose relatively to each other, and in which we combine together, the various functions through which we know ourselves as spirits—this I stated in a former connection. But there are two things above all with which the distinctive dignity of man is bound up—thought or knowledge and moral action. I do not consider religion, for this reason, that for the man who recognises religion and wants it, it is just the fundamental question still, whether he has to seek that sublimest experience implied in it, in which one is concerned with the last and highest aim of man, on the path of knowledge, or on that of moral action, *i.e.* whether it is the former or the latter which must on this ground be held superior to the other. And art I leave out of view, because it is impossible, by giving precedence to art, to arrive at a general view of things; since he who gives it precedence over all else by so doing renounces such a general view, and seeks the final consummation of his mental life not in that, but (vainly enough, to be sure) in the temperament associated with æsthetic enjoyment. But knowledge and moral action—these are the two human functions which come under consideration here. And the critical question is whether we ought to seek God on the one path or on the other. Of course there can be no thought of an exclusive opposition, of an alternative in

this sense. There is *no* general view of things, and in consonance with that no form of mental life possible, in which both knowledge and moral action do not have their place. Just as little is a form of religion conceivable, at that stage of mental development which alone comes under consideration here, which does not place religious experience in relation to the one as well as to the other. The question is which of the two has precedence and is held superior to the other. Is it properly required that we should seek God on the path of knowledge, whether it be knowledge of a more theoretical and philosophical description, or of a more mystical and religious character; and is everything that leads to this and furthers this object exalted accordingly, as having beyond comparison the highest claim, above the whole of man's secular life in the world? Or is it the opposite that is true? Is it the case that moral action possesses the higher significance in religion, so much so that even the knowledge of God, which of course is never a matter of indifference, but under all circumstances preserves its fundamental significance, depends on whether one seeks God by obedience to His commandments, by doing His will? That is the opposition which here asserts itself. And we ought not to deceive ourselves as to the import of it. It does not do to say, let us suppose, that the truth lies in emphasising both sides in the same manner and degree. For although the opposition is not exclusive, in the sense that a value for religion is ascribed only to the one function or the other, yet *the two possible cases of superordination and subordination do stand in such a relation of exclusive opposition*

to one another. And the fact that such is the case inevitably finds expression in opposite estimates of man's moral duties in the world. As a rule, whoever wants to put both faculties on a level will yet subordinate those duties to another body of specifically religious duties. And here the fact may be recalled, that ideals are implicated which may, and indeed must, be contrasted with each other in sharply outlined features, even though in actual reality there are transitions exhibited from the one to the other in a manifold variety of forms.

Now it is these two possible cases which have just been discussed that find their expression in the Greek idea of the Logos and in the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God respectively. That the former constitutes the centre of a system of thought which unconditionally yields the first place to knowledge, has been shown above (p. 59). And the fact that Christianity, on the contrary, associates the highest aim of man first and foremost with the moral righteousness which has to be realised in the world, was formerly brought out in our discussions on the Nature of the Christian Religion. In the phrase "Kingdom of God" there is already an indication of that. And the New Testament leaves us nowhere in doubt on this point, that knowledge or understanding in the religious sphere has as its presupposition the inclination of the will to God's law. Thus it is clear that the difference between the two ideas really includes an opposition.

The same result appears if we regard the interpretation of the world and of the position of man in it which answers to each of the two ideas respectively.

For in this case also a twofold issue is possible in the abstract. Either we set out with man and make the idea which expresses his aim and his highest vocation decisive for our interpretation of the world also, or we set out with the world; and on the idea which gives expression to the fullest meaning of the world we base our interpretation of man, of his aim and his vocation. The former alternative represents the general character of the *Christian* theory of the world. Christian faith interprets the world as means for bringing in the Kingdom of God, *i.e.* as means for a divine purpose to be realised in and through man as distinguished from the rest of the creation; it therefore subordinates the whole world to man and his ideal concerns as means to end. It is quite different with the Logos idea and the theory of the world answering to it. Here the other possibility spoken of is actualised; the conception which is formed of the world is made the ground of the interpretation given of what constitutes the essence of man, his aim and his vocation. Not, it is true, in the sense of Materialism. What gave the Logos idea and the view of the world which was governed by it a materialistic impress at the outset, was checked even by the Stoa, and entirely cast off by Philo. The world itself is made to stand, in a certain sense, for a spiritual substance, just in so far as it is pervaded by the Logos. But now what is thus the spiritual principle of the world serves also to interpret man. He assumes the highest rank among the beings of the world in so far as he shares in a special manner in the Logos; the spiritual life of men is the highest stage of worldly life. But here we do not, as in the Biblical and

Christian theory of the world, go so far as to set man in opposition to all the rest of the world, so much so, that in the purpose of men the purpose of the world is recognised and the world is regarded as means for an eternal end which is to be realised in humanity. And therefore it may be said that in this respect too not merely a difference but an opposition is found between the two ideas and the theories of the world which are dominated by them. In the one case the world is understood and interpreted by starting with man, in the other case man is explained by starting with the world.

This fact is doubtless obscured in so far as in both cases the theory of the world bears a religious character. For that implies that in both cases one and the same thing, viz. union with God or participation in the divine life, is called the goal of man's aspiration, and that his vocation is recognised in one and the same thing, viz. in making for that goal and striving after whatever serves his purpose in this matter. But here now comes in the opposition just described between the conceptions of religious experience, the opposition which is the proper root of all these distinctions. And if we go on to develop the religious theory of the world, the opposition immediately reappears in it also. For it comes up to the Logos idea if we regard the world as a whole, and the mental and historical life of men only in virtue of its being the highest stage of worldly life, as the revelation of God; whereas the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God refers us to this historical life as the proper sphere of divine revelation, and teaches us to recognise in the world the divinely

created theatre for displaying the Kingdom of God.[1] However one regards the matter, therefore, the end here as elsewhere will be that an opposition is mani-

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 354. The four fundamental forms of Religion (cf. note to p. 8) have four types of Faith answering to them. Thus it is easy to perceive how man's aim at acquiring the manifold good things of earth is essentially connected with Polytheism, whereas the aim at acquiring a Chief Good above the world leads to Monotheism. Again, in proportion as the good things of the moral order gain significance in religion, the Natural Divinities are themselves transfigured so as to become ethical Persons. In the sphere of Monotheism this difference recurs in this way, that with a spiritualised Natural Religion a Pantheistic faith is combined — that follows immediately from the endeavour prevailing in such religion on the part of the devotee to have his own life merged in that of the Godhead—whereas Christianity is tied throughout to the faith that God is the highest energy of a personal Will. But according to the nature of the good which is principally sought, and according to the idea of the Godhead that prevails, the idea of Revelation also takes different forms. Revelation, viewed as a religious notion, always indicates the manner in which God bestows good. In this notion therefore are comprised the two other fundamental notions of the good in the religious sense and of the Godhead. Conformably with the ethical character of Christianity, however, the revelation of God should be sought in history, which is the sphere of moral growth and development. The belief that God Himself (through Jesus Christ) has interposed in the history of men, and offers Himself to men for fellowship with them, is the consummation of our faith in Revelation. Revelation is a real self-revelation of God, and on the other hand, inasmuch as it is given in history, it has relatively to the individual and his faith objective ground and authoritative significance. There is also implied in it, owing to the spiritual character of the Christian religion, a real communication of supernatural truths. Our religion can therefore with good right be described as Revealed Religion in the stricter sense. In the other religions, on the contrary, what they know as Revelation is always something isolated and transient, an operation of the Godhead in nature or in history without permanent significance; the Godhead is not really present itself in it. Or Mysticism transfers Revelation to the individual soul; the Godhead by this means communicating itself to that soul in superabundant measure, and offering itself for its enjoyment. Here Revelation acquires no independent and objective basis as contrasted with religious experience. And whereas in Christianity nature is only in a remoter degree the theatre of Revelation, the region in which are displayed the power and wisdom of the personal God who has to be clearly distinguished from it, it is consistent with the Pantheistic faith of Mystical piety to view the universal life of the world, including nature, as the self-manifestation of the Godhead.

fested. But again, it is not as if on the one side only the world, and on the other only the mental and historical life of men could be explained as the revelation of God, and as if in so far an exclusive opposition arose. But undoubtedly the relations of precedence and subordination, inasmuch as they are reversed in the two cases, do stand in that attitude towards one another. Those who will not allow that this is the case, but declare for a co-ordination of the two, pass over in principle while doing so to the side of the Logos speculation. That is, in another form, the same position of matters that was indicated above.

Answering to this now, we have specially the alteration which the Christian faith sustained when it was scientifically formulated and developed by means of the Logos speculation. The alteration consists, viz., in this, that in the system which is the result of that theological activity, the *centre of gravity, instead of being placed in the historical Christ who founded the Kingdom of God, is placed in the Christ who as the eternal Logos of God was the Mediator in the creation of the world.*

That assertion applies in some degree even to the *conclusions about God and the world* which were formerly discussed. They do not sketch the Christian theory of the world by starting with the principle that the world is the means for realising God's Kingdom; and therefore also they are not announced as the content of a faith which grows out of Christian saving faith. But they put the Logos idea at the basis of the conception of God and the world which they develop, and the truth which they express

passes for a gift of the Logos. Not from the former but from the latter peculiarity do they receive their Christian character. Not the historical Christ and the new gift received in Him, but the eternal Logos, by whom the world was created, and revelation, including that which was made in Christ, was mediated, is the determinative conception. And here I observe that this reference of the conclusions in question to the Logos speculation by no means contradicts the fact set forth above, that rational truth is exhibited in them. For what reason acknowledges is simply a gift and revelation of the Logos; Christian knowledge has only the advantage that it is more sure and certain, because it rests on a more complete revelation of the Logos. A contrast between rational and superhuman truth, in the sense familiar to later times, the early Church knows nothing of as yet. Even in so far, therefore, the facts require us to maintain that there is a connection between the conclusions in question and the Logos speculation which governed the whole development. It appears from those conclusions themselves that the centre of gravity of the ecclesiastical system lies in the eternal Logos and not in the historical Christ.

This becomes still more clear from the dogmas which require more definitely than do those general conclusions to be referred to the historical Christ. In the first place and above all, this truth is gathered from *Christology* itself. It is from the identification of the person of Christ with the Logos that the impulse leading to the Church's conclusions with reference to Christ is derived. The process traversed

different stages till the dogma emerged in that form which has endured ever since. And it can be plainly recognised that that process had the effect of making the dogma always approximate more closely to the Christian faith regarding Christ. For if at the outset as well as down to the time of Tertullian the relation of the Logos to the world is the principal matter, and as compared with this the reference to the Incarnation passes into the background, there comes to be an equilibrium of the two sides afterwards in Origen; and the Christology of Athanasius finally gains the day, the Christology which annuls the *essential* connection between the Logos and the world, and teaches us to recognise in the Logos above all the eternal divine spirit of the Incarnate One. But nevertheless what was involved in the impulse spoken of decides as to the proper basal thought of the doctrine. That doctrine does not show us the historical Christ in His eternal significance for faith, but enriches our knowledge of the Logos by adding the knowledge that He became man. Not in the historical Christ but in the Logos does the centre of gravity of the dogma lie: at all times it has been found that it is only with difficulty and some art that the evangelical portrait of Jesus can be reconciled with this doctrine.

Naturally the doctrines which exhibit the salvation of men as due to Christ are not otherwise characterised than Christology itself. Here *the doctrines of man, of his sin, and his redemption through Christ*, fall to be considered. But the very connection of these doctrines with one another shows plainly what is the

primary ruling conception. It is that, viz., of the original endowment of man, which belongs to him for the reason that he was created by the Logos and had a share in the Logos from the Creation onwards. Sin and death prevail in the world because there was no continuance in that original condition of things; and what Christ brought is understood as a restoration of what had been posited in the Creation but was lost by the Fall. *Not the historical Christ but Adam is the principal person in the traditional system; Christ holds that position only in so far as He is the Logos through whom the first created man gains such significance.*[1]

This *fundamental conception* is then developed in detail in various ways, but in none of the forms of doctrine in the early Church is it denied. There are *two developments* especially to be distinguished, which run parallel to one another: the one, in which Christ passes wholly into the background behind the Logos as the Mediator of revelation, did not attain permanent supremacy in the Church; the other, which teaches us to understand the manifestation of Christ as the turning-point of human destiny as well as of the history of the universe, passed over into dogma, and supplied the theoretical justification of the ecclesiastical system of Catholicism. The difference between the two is connected with the often-mentioned point of difference, appearing in the fact that the highest aim of man, as it has now become attainable once more

[1] Cf. Ritschl, *Theologie u. Metaphysik*, 2nd ed., p. 41. "The whole structure of Dogmatics derives its guiding idea not from Christ as the embodiment of revelation, but from the perfection of Adam."

through Christ, can be understood under the presuppositions governing the theology of the early Church as knowledge of God or as a mystical hyperphysical union with Him.

The former is the development which the fundamental conception underwent in the *theology of the Apologists*. According to it, the drama of humanity as well as that of the individual person is acted out in the sphere of *knowledge*. The knowledge for which men were qualified in virtue of their origin was in large measure lost, especially through their being misled by demons, and was converted into error. The revelation proceeding from the Logos restores it, and thereby blesses men; it is Christ by whom that revelation has reached its consummation, which at once completes and attests it. In view of this emphasis on knowledge, man's moral life falls into the second place, being brought here, according to what was formerly stated, only into that external connection with religion which is expressed by the belief in Retribution. On the other hand, the conclusions referring to God and the world and the divine Logos who rules in the world become very specially the substance of Christianity, which is above everything new knowledge. That is, this is what we meet with in the *theology* of the Apologists. That their Christian piety does not end with this, is of course certain, as it depends at the same time on the ideas of Christianity and the earliest Church prevailing within their communion. But all turns on their theology when we are considering the share they had in the origin of dogma. And what has been

said holds true with regard to it. They were in consequence the first to set up the framework in which dogma enclosed Christian truth, holding, viz., that sin consists in the impairment of the primordial perfection and nobility of man as derived from the Logos, and that what Christ has brought is a restoration of the original possession. Or, in other words, even in this first attempt to give the Christian Church a theology, we find that the centre of gravity of the old theology lies not in the historical Christ but in Christ the Logos.

Though, however, this development of the fundamental conception by the Apologists remained as a leaven in ecclesiastical theology, yet it did not attain to sovereign rank in the realm of dogma. In fact the position which the Person of Christ had assigned to it in that theological scheme was too subordinate, and in it the leading ideas of the Christian religion were put too far in the background, to have allowed of its responding permanently to the faith of the Church. It was that development of the fundamental conception *which Irenæus opposed to the Gnostic systems* that first had lasting success.[1] There it is no longer the knowledge of God, but union with God and participation in His immortal life, that appears as the highest aim and the highest good of man. Adam's Fall and the Incarnation of God in Christ are contrasted with each other as events corresponding to one another and decisive for the fate of men: the alienation from the divine immortal life which was the consequence for human nature of the catastrophe in the one case,

[1] Cf. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, 2nd ed., pp. 464 ff., 506 ff.

was again rectified by the coming of God in the flesh, so that human nature is now capable again of participating in the divine life; a recovery of what was lost through Adam was effected through Christ. In this way the fundamental conception is really *made to approximate* towards the New Testament preaching, especially the Pauline. What Irenæus wished too above all to accomplish by means of this theory, viz., in opposition to the Gnostic separation between the Creator of the world and the supreme God who effected the redemption, to vindicate the unity of the God who created the world and redeemed men, furnishes an inalienable fundamental truth of Christianity. In particular, and the matter is not of least significance, the possibility is hereby reached of proving the historical occurrence of the manifestation of Christ, or of the Incarnation of God in Him, to be the fundamental fact of Christianity and of the Christian Church, and Christ Himself to be the Redeemer. It is even possible from this standpoint to deduce from the individual traits of the historical life of Christ an essential significance for the redemption. For whereas in the view of the Apologists only the external circumstance that prophecy was fulfilled in the life of Christ had been of importance, Irenæus recognises in that life a representation and accomplishment of the "reunion" ("*Wiederzusammenfassung*") of man with God in which redemption itself consists. Nevertheless the primary conception is and remains the same as in the case of the Apologists, in so far as decisive importance is ascribed to the original endowment of man by the Logos, and not to the historical gain

acquired through Christ. Irenæus himself still lived among the ideas of the original Church and original Christianity. That fact, however, exercised no influence on his theological labours. He did not follow out farther the path on which Paul was a pioneer, a course which might have led him so far as to cast off sensuous Chiliasm completely, and to deduce from the ideas of primitive Christianity the permanent spiritual content of the Christian religion. Instead of that, there stands in his system a sensuously conceived Eschatology, unreconciled with a theology which, like that of the Apologists, only showing a profounder grasp, establishes the Christian faith in doctrinal form by a combination of it with Hellenism. Wherefore also the agreement of his trains of thought with those of Paul, great as it appears at first sight, does not preclude a divergence at the core of the matter. And that divergence is no other than this, that the process of thought in the case of the Apostle Paul is always developed in view of the historical but now exalted and glorified Christ, whereas with Irenæus the whole stress rests on the fact that God or the divine Logos became man in Christ, and thereby reconciled human nature to God. With Paul the Biblical idea of the Kingdom of God is determinative, with Irenæus, on the contrary, it is the philosophical idea of the Logos. In the former case the centre of gravity lies in the historical Christ, in the latter in the eternal Logos of the Father.

But in the direction which ecclesiastical theology followed with Irenæus lies that development of it from which issued dogma. For although in the

Alexandrians the older conception of the Apologists, which emphasises knowledge as the essential matter, returns in a new and exaggerated form, and although Origen assumes an important place in the history of the development of dogma, yet, for the reasons already mentioned above, the extension of the primary conception which we first find in Irenæus became finally decisive for dogma.

But at the same time there still remains room for important *differences* in the moulding of individual topics. We find such differences especially *in the manner in which, subject to this primary conception, the attempt was now made to do justice to the significance of morality.* And this matter falls to be considered here, because it is just the depreciation of the moral point of view in the guiding religious idea that forms the divergence of the ecclesiastical system reared upon the Logos speculation from the system of thought peculiar to the Christian faith. The chief difference, however, in this relation occurs as between the Græco-Oriental and the Western theology.

The former, viz. the *Græco-Oriental Theology*, is inclined to view the consequences of the Fall which were rectified again by Christ as merely hyperphysical, and to represent the sphere of moral life, regarded from the point of view of freedom, of the free determination of each individual, as *collateral* with the religious sphere. The same procedure accords best with the genuine character of the Logos speculation, a speculation which puts moral action in the second place and subordinates it to religious activity, as if the latter

were something different and peculiar. To this has to be added the fact that that theology is thus relieved from the difficulty of speaking of an *original moral* perfection, a notion which contains a contradiction; whereas nothing prevents us from affirming an original perfection so soon as it is viewed as purely religious, as in itself ethically indeterminate. Lastly, nothing seems more consonant with fact than to regard the moral sphere (the treatment of which, as is obvious, cannot be omitted in any organisation of Christian doctrine) from the point of view of freedom. But of course all these merits have as their presupposition a separation between the object of religious craving and the moral ideal, such as consists indeed with the Logos idea but not with the Christian faith. We can recognise with remarkable clearness, in this very treatment of the sphere of moral life within the domain of Greek theology, the connections discussed here. It is here brought clearly to light that the framework of ecclesiastical theology in which Christ is esteemed as the restorer of what was lost by the Fall, has its basis in the Logos speculation, and in what way this happens; a speculation, *i.e.*, the ruling idea of which does not include the moral sphere itself in the chief end and good of man. But it is no less apparent that here we have something which does not answer to the Christian faith, but which, if consistently developed, as is done in Greek theology, lowers the significance of the moral point of view in a manner contradictory to Christianity.

It is otherwise with *the Western Theology*. Even at an early period it was bent on combining more

closely together those two points of view, the religious and the moral. Even though that undertaking may have other historical causes besides what is here assigned, and though it may be connected with a difference between the Western and Eastern *Ethos*, yet we must at all events acknowledge that that endeavour is one in which the most characteristic tendency of the Christian faith becomes operative. The classical representative of this system of doctrine peculiar to the West is Augustine. But here too it is shown that the primary conception, that framework derived from the Logos speculation, is and remains foreign to the Christian faith. It appears in the first place in this, viz., that the Western conception was after all assimilated again in Mediæval Scholasticism to the Eastern, which reproduces the genuine features of the Logos speculation. True, the Schoolmen speak of the *justitia originalis* which the first man possessed, and which was lost by the Fall. They *appear* therefore to view the perfection of Adam as moral, and so to do justice to the ethical point of view of Christianity in the conception they entertain regarding the highest aim. In reality they do so only in appearance. For the *justitia originalis* of which they speak is more precisely explained as a supernatural gift of grace which does not belong to the nature of man at all. Thus it is only the *name* that stamps that perfection as something moral, whereas in reality it is viewed as something supernatural and religious. In other words, in the framework of traditional doctrine the result of the primary conception was immediately asserted once

more, and gained the day over the opposite tendency of the Christian faith. Then Protestant theology dealt in earnest with the idea of the *justitia originalis* of Adam. But because that involves the suicidal conception of an original moral perfection, it too found itself obliged to limit the idea, and to conceal the contradiction underlying it by the affirmation that that perfection resembled child-like innocence. In this way that theology proves on its part as well that it is impossible to represent the ideas of the Christian faith without impairment in a framework which answers so essentially to an opposite view of the world. And therefore it may be said that Western theology also testifies to the non-Christian origin of the primary conception inasmuch as on the one hand it departs again from its proper tendency, though it accorded as a matter of fact with the Christian faith, and on the other hand, where it carries out that tendency, burdens itself in proportion as it does so with an insoluble contradiction.

And this brings us to another aspect of the matter which must not remain unnoticed. The amalgamation of the Christian faith with the Logos speculation, the result of which came to be dogma, had not merely the effect that the faith was altered and that the centre of gravity of the system was displaced. It also had the consequence that dogma, in so far as it is after all an expression of Christian truth, includes an *inherent contradiction.* The following is a more particular account of the situation in this regard.

The Logos speculation is not calculated to impart an

essential and decisive significance to particular occurrences of history. Philosophical speculation, as derived from impulses prevailing in antiquity, has in general been inflexibly opposed to that idea down to this day. But the Christian faith stands or falls with the conviction that it is founded on the revelation of God in history, on the historical life of Jesus Christ, and the events of that life. Christian faith represents the fact of that life, and what it includes, as amounting to the principle of all true knowledge, such knowledge as has reference to things in their totality and is not merely empirical. But thence arises the contradiction of which I spoke. Dogma leads, we may even say, to a view which assumes an attitude of indifference towards individual historical occurrences, and precludes the recognition of their fundamental significance; hence the emphasis put upon these, an emphasis which cannot really be avoided, comes to stand as an *irrational* element of dogma. The justification of this issue is sought in the *Fall of man*, which is held to have disturbed the simple and rational course of things, and to have necessitated the corresponding acts of God which destroyed the consequences of sin, the Incarnation of the Logos, and the death of the God-man on the cross. Thus it comes about that, in spite of the Logos speculation lying at its base, dogma turns so essentially round the two foci of the Fall of Adam and the Incarnation of the Logos, *i.e.* round particular historical occurrences. But with this elucidation the object aimed at is not accomplished, the contradiction is not really solved. There is and remains a conjunction of heterogeneous thoughts. If the reason con-

cerned in the formation of dogma reflects upon itself, it discovers that these historical occurrences are neither more nor less than symbols: what must really be understood by the Fall is the estrangement from God which constitutes the essence of the finite, and the Incarnation is the reunion with Him which is accomplished in religion, and must be repeated in the case of each individual; or the Creation of the world, which must be supposed eternal, is identified with the Incarnation, and the origin of the consciousness of that union with God which was first perfected in Jesus is referred to the Spirit. Such thoughts have played round dogma from the commencement down to this day, running as they do on the lines of the Logos speculation. On the other hand, in the combination mentioned, something else is made of history than what it actually is: *in place of the history of revelation*, which appeals to faith, there comes *a complex of hyperphysical occurrences* by which the ecclesiastical system of Catholicism holds that it was established in the world. In this peculiarity the mythological character of the Logos doctrine of Philo (p. 57), asserts itself. The manner in which history is estimated in dogma is true also to its affinity with the Gnostic speculations. It is not history in the simple sense of the word, the significance of which is here perceived and admitted, but history as a drama connecting heaven and earth, and played in various acts. Though the difference between the fantastic notions of the Gnostics and the sober announcements of dogma remains exceedingly wide, yet the formal affinity—which does not preclude a material difference

or even opposition—is undeniable. Whoever will not admit this, may compare what results when Theosophy and the so-called Realism of the history of Salvation develop those elements of dogma farther, in order to arrive at a homogeneous conception of the whole. In that case the alleged affinity is plainly enough brought to light. If, on the other hand, the Christian faith is explicated in accordance with its own meaning, as it answers to the idea of the Kingdom of God, then the fact that historical life is the necessary means for the realisation of the divine plan with the world is taken up into the primary conception itself, and it may be deduced from the conception that particular occurrences in that life may gain a decisive significance for the whole, and for all the particular members. Certainly even then it would be definitively agreed that in accordance with Christian knowledge the course of things in the world has been altered by evil, and that the revelation in Christ acquires in *addition* to its other features the character of being a restoration and reparation. But then that conviction would not, as now comes to be the case with dogma, have to serve as a justification of the fact that the Christian estimate of history has to be articulated together with a conflicting primary conception, but it would be represented as a formally consistent modification of the primary conception itself. The contradiction in the other case is not founded on the Christian faith, but on that amalgamation of it with the Logos speculation from which issued dogma.

But if the origin of dogma is of the nature which

has now been described in detail, nothing is more erroneous than the assumption that dogma in its mature form is the direct continuation of that composition of doctrine which is already begun in the New Testament. What gives this wide-spread opinion a certain semblance of truth on a superficial view, is the circumstance that undoubtedly there are points of contact to be observed. In particular, one is found in the fact that in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the Prologue of the Gospel of John the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ is made to lean on the Logos idea. That such is the case I at least would not seek to deny. Any one, however, who is not satisfied with a superficial observation of that fact, but considers the whole connection, must admit that those conclusions of the New Testament are *the latest offshoots* of the process of thought in the New Testament, whereas in the ecclesiastical development of doctrine the identification of the pre-incarnate Christ with the Logos is made the determinative *starting-point* of the process of thought. Even in the Gospel of John we find nothing more than just a *leaning* upon the Logos idea. Even here it is not this idea, but that of the perfect *revelation* of God in Christ, which is the distinctively governing thought. And whoever considers that according to John that revelation of God was made for the purpose of bringing men to the saving knowledge of God, and again that the knowledge of God so attained calls forth love to God, and that love to God necessarily expresses itself in love to the brethren, and in general in the fulfilling of His commandments—he soon sees in what close

touch all this stands with the preaching of the Kingdom recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. Here there is *not a trace* to be discovered as yet of that change in the direction of thought which we find in later dogma, where the Incarnation as a hyperphysical occurrence, the reunion of God with human nature completed by it, now comes to be the principal matter. This point of contact is so far from disproving the difference in principle between the system of thought which is identified with the Christian faith, and which is attested in the New Testament, and the ecclesiastical system of doctrine, that it is just here that the difference becomes specially explicit. The process of thought in the New Testament is in its kind a whole which reaches its consummation in the Johannine theology. *In these circumstances there is no progress in a straight line.* The fact that the old theology begins at the point at which the writers of the New Testament arrive as a closing point, tells in truth of no such progress, but signifies that the leading idea is coming to be different, to be relatively opposed. I do not think it will be possible to mistake that fact for any length of time.

Another point of contact between dogma and the New Testament appears to lie in the Pauline contrast between the old and the new humanity, between the first and the second Adam. But in truth the case is the same with this topic as with that which has just been discussed. Not merely is it the case that, as was formerly pointed out, there remains after all between Paul and Irenæus an essential difference at the root of the matter, notwithstanding all the simi-

larity which exists—not merely is that the case, but it is not correct at all to take the exposition of the apostle which is referred to as the frame within which the Pauline thoughts are to be grouped. For, in the well-known passage, Rom. v. 12 ff., Paul is not at all concerned with giving instruction about Adam and Christ, and their relation to one another, but solely with giving the sharpest point to his proposition about the righteousness which leads to life and its establishment on the (obedience of the) *one*, and its independence of (the works of the) *many*. He does this by bringing forward for comparison the doom of death impending over the *many* on account of *one* man. And it is simply this that is the point of comparison; as the continuation in ver. 18 f. shows, but especially the parenthetic remarks in vers. 15–17 prove, which demonstrate that that relation of the one to the many obtains in connection with the establishment of righteousness and of life much more decidedly still than in connection with the origin of the doom of death. It is not taught here that the salvation accomplished in Christ is a restoration of what was lost in Adam, but justification without the works of the law is explained and established by means of the comparison; wherefore also a word as to the true significance of the law forms the close (ver. 20 f.). Above all, in the second passage which has to be considered, 1 Cor. xv. 45 ff., Paul does not at all conceive the relation of the first and the second man as a contrast in two parallel lines of characterisation, but in such wise that what was effected through Christ appears in comparison with the beginning

assumed in Adam as the *higher completing stage.* There is nothing implied in all this that warrants us in giving forth as a development of Biblical ideas the framework of ecclesiastical Dogmatics which has been spoken of, in which Adam with his endowments derived from the Logos comes to be of the first importance, and in reconciling in this way the difference between the system of thought peculiar to the Christian faith and evidenced in the New Testament and the ecclesiastical system of doctrine which is dependent on the Logos speculation. The conclusion must rather be that we understand the relation of the two to each other, only if we add that in the latter system a line of thought of quite a different character has been combined with that of the Christian faith.

Furthermore, even the originators of the old theology themselves were conscious of the fact that they did not by any means make use of Greek philosophy merely in the *formal* relation, and they felt the necessity of justifying themselves on that account. They did so by declaring that philosophy to be a revelation of the same Logos that became man in Christ; or they even taught that the philosophers derived their wisdom from the Old Testament. The simple thought that what is to pass for Christian knowledge must be founded on revelation was firmly established in their case. They sought to do justice to it by such a derivation of philosophy from revelation. But that the dependence of philosophy on the Old Testament is a fiction every one knows in our day. That it is as little to the purpose to assert that revelation of the Logos which is found in Greek

philosophy (viewed in quite a general light, the thought may certainly find support in the Universalism of the Christian faith) in such a way that philosophy is exalted above faith, no one could doubt who concerns himself with the Christian faith according to revelation and Scripture. But in that case, is not the opinion negatived which regards ecclesiastical dogma as a substantially unadulterated expression of the Christian faith? Must we not either accept the proposed derivation of Greek philosophy, or, if we cannot do so, make it clear to ourselves that in dogma we have to do with a revision of the Christian faith which involves a far-reaching alteration of its substance? The fact which seems so simple and self-evident that science as then existing, that contemporary philosophy, succeeded in determining the form of dogma had when looked at more closely that extraordinary implication.

An objective knowledge of the content of faith was the aim pursued by the theology from which issued dogma. This undertaking, with its implication and its important consequences, we have now become acquainted with. Does it follow now from the discussion we have carried on here that the undertaking itself is false and objectionable? Plainly not. That general question remains entirely beyond the range of our reflection, and has also been left untouched in what precedes. But certainly it follows that an alteration in the content of the Christian faith is the result of what was begun. Of course, what we have immediately before us is only this, that at the time these

were the consequences, that the assertion applies therefore to that undertaking in the form in which the theology of the early Church apprehended and accomplished it. That there will be the same consequence under other circumstances as well, especially with other philosophical presuppositions, and that in general it *must* be so, seems by no means to be made out yet by what we have ascertained. Yet it might be possible to show that something of the kind must be the result in all cases. *Provisionally* at this stage attention may be drawn in this sense to what follows.

It is a presupposition of the undertaking in question that it indicates an advance in knowledge. What we ascertain objectively, we know; and in general it is assumed that knowledge is a more perfect kind of apprehension than faith. And what else should lead to this attempt in the Christian Church, except that such an advance is hoped for from it? Or if it may first of all be a purely Apologetic interest that leads to it, yet in its result it yields an advantage of the kind; knowledge becomes thereby more sure and complete. But now it is *God* who is the object of religious faith and religious knowledge. Consequently the success of the undertaking we speak of indicates an advance in the *knowledge of God.* But who will deny that in that case it must also be regarded as a *religious* advance? However, one cannot look for an advance in religion on this path without thereby ascribing to knowledge the supreme place in religion. True, it is not at all requisite that one should understand this knowledge of God as something dead, dry, purely theoretical. The practical character of religion will

always require one to accentuate the truth that knowledge must also be practical and mystical. But that makes no difference on what is here meant. The general truth remains that in the sphere of religion, the contemplative side, whether it is regarded more in the theoretical or in the practical light, has thus the *first* place conceded to it. On this procedure the principle quite naturally asserts itself, that the chief good must be sought in knowledge. The moral life passes relatively into the background. But what is always the alternative is which factor has to get precedence, knowledge or moral action. All those consequences we have become familiar with issue from this precedence which is granted to knowledge; it is *from this circumstance* that the alteration in the content of faith resulted, because Christianity is established on the opposite principle that growth in the *knowledge* of God can be attained only by the subjection of one's own will to God's will, by active exercise in the fulfilment of the divine commandments.

But, it might be objected, why not uphold both principles? Certainly the individual can attain to true growth in the knowledge of God only by such practical obedience. Yet what prevents the Church as a whole, and in the interest of all those whose intellectual requirements are developed, from proceeding on the other path at the same time, and by means of theological activity aspiring to advances in knowledge? For the one thing does not exclude the other. The advance is different in kind in the two cases. To misunderstand that fact is to confuse points of view

which really require to be kept distinct. Still, he who would argue thus would misunderstand the import of the fact that the advance in the two cases is different in kind. He would be supposing that it was a question only of a *formal* distinction, while the content, the known truth itself, was all the while the same. To judge otherwise would mean indeed destroying the unity of consciousness, and approximating to the theory of duplicate truth. But that very supposition is false. *Form and content cannot be kept separate in that way.* That was not possible in the early Church, and, as has just been shown, that is in general impossible. Therefore we conclude that the attempt to apprehend objectively the content of the faith involves a substantial alteration of it, and consequently is equivalent to an injury to Christianity.

The same thing appears from another point of view besides. *Faith* is of such significance in the Christian religion, that subjective Christianity and faith are exactly identical. This truth, which was lost in Catholicism, the Reformation asserted anew in the evangelical Church. But the matter cannot rest there if the situation requires us to advance from faith to an objective apprehension, *i.e.* to knowledge. For in that case faith has the position assigned to it of being something purely theoretical, and of being too an imperfect preliminary step to knowledge. So regarded, however, it cannot amount to the whole requirement. The inference naturally follows that for the Christian it is of importance not only that he should have faith, but that he should also enter into a living connection with the saving influences of Christianity, and

prove himself true by moral obedience. In other words, under these circumstances Christianity is always made something which, like the Catholic religion, denies the standpoint of faith as restored in the evangelical Church. And we should be under no illusion as to the necessity of the connection which obtains here. If Christian truth is established and preached in the form of knowledge, it *must* follow that the faith which appropriates it becomes a theoretical function of the understanding. The maintenance of that standpoint of faith which is distinctive of the evangelical Church is certainly not secured by correct teaching about faith and by laying stress on *fiducia* as the essential thing in it, if that is done in connection with a system of doctrine which is itself Scholastic in its character, and formulated on the standpoint of intellectualism. The important matter is rather this, that Christian truth should be exhibited in all its parts as the truth of faith, in such wise that *that* faith and *only* that faith which is *fiducia* can appropriate it. But that is not done if its form rests on an objective knowledge of the content of faith. For that reason too, this undertaking is one which does not accord with Christianity.

CHAPTER II.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEOLOGY.

The principle of authority in Theology—Reason and authority in Mediæval Theology—The Philosophical Development in the Middle Ages—The doctrine of Thomas Aquinas.

A PRINCIPLE which came to be of great significance in the later development of Christian theology we left in the first instance untouched, in treating of the sources and beginnings of dogma, the *principle*, viz., *of Authority*. That omission was by no means due to the opinion that at that period the principle was not yet concerned in any way in the development of doctrine. But it exercised no influence worth mentioning on the Church's conclusions so far as regards their *content*. That is true of the principle of Authority *as such*. The concrete historical fact, indeed, which amounts to an Authority for the Christian Church, Divine Revelation, or say the Faith that appropriated it, was doubtless the one factor in the process referred to. But if the principle of Authority is really to exercise an influence, what ranks as Authority, that is in this case Divine Revelation or Holy Scripture, must be actually understood and realised in *its own content*. And there was no thought of that on the occasion of the origin of dogma. Rather were tissues of thought of foreign origin continually woven

into Holy Scripture without examination or question, as if it were quite an understood thing; and they were confused with the fundamental ideas of Revelation. Thus we can make the origin of dogma perfectly intelligible to our minds, as soon as we simply regard the Christian faith as the one factor operating in the process: *the principle of the Authority of Divine Revelation* was not really carried out; and hence that principle does not yet come under consideration when we seek to comprehend the origin of dogma.

On the other hand, the case is altogether different as regards the further development of theology, which is based on dogma and serves to explicate it. Here the principle of Authority now really became a basal principle of theological thought. The great question, the particular decision of which determines the conception and accomplishment in detail of the task of theology, is that referring to the *relation of Authority and Reason.* And further, subjection to Authority is no longer now a mere intention but a realised truth. For what is now held to be Authority is the traditional body of dogma, which was also as a matter of fact the unimpeachable presupposition of all that followed, a circumstance which maintains its force in part down to the present hour. But this very principle of Authority which governs the whole succeeding development was framed in connection with those bodies of thought which we considered in the preceding chapter. Before, therefore, we enter on the proper theme of this chapter, we must cast a glance at the origin of this principle of Authority in the theology of the early Church.

In the Christian faith we are concerned with

obedience to Divine Revelation. The content of the Revelation is such that the faith which finds its object in it naturally attains that form. But for later generations Divine Revelation is supplied in the Biblical records. These are propositions which I do not require again to go back upon here.[1] So too it is quite clear that from the first all this could not remain unnoticed in the Christian Church and theology. The question is *what form* the principle there assumed and required to assume.

The answer is simple and easy. If ecclesiastical dogma is the proper and adequate form of Christian truth, if the latter as being objective knowledge requires to be expressed and formulated as knowledge of the content of the faith, then it is quite clear too that Revelation has to stand for a *supernatural source of knowledge.* The fact that it communicates supernatural truths is directly implied in the nature of the case, as soon as the religion in question has a spiritual character, makes over a spiritual good. And this peculiarity is deeply seated in the nature of Christianity in particular.[2]

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 437 ff.—Holy Scripture is not itself the Revelation of God to us; Revelation proper is rather found in the historical development which has its centre in the advent of Jesus Christ. This Revelation is received and appropriated by Faith, which, however, considering the ethical character of the chief good (communicated by Revelation), always preserves the character of obedience, even in Protestantism; only here obedience is free and is found by experience to be the completion of one's own freedom. Then Holy Scripture forms the intermediate link between Revelation itself and the faith of later generations. It possesses this significance as the record of Revelation, as a body of writings which partly report of Revelation and partly arose themselves in connection with it.

[2] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 331 f.—(Cf. note to p. 96 in this book).

But from this comes in the new connection the other fact that it is a supernatural source of *knowledge*. The truths of Revelation are not understood now as those which appeal to faith and make the person who accepts them with sincere faith a new creature. Instead of that, they become propositions which can in a manner analogous to the rest of human knowledge be accepted by the intellect, by belief as a subordinate function of the theoretical mind, and therefore in such a way that much else must be added to that belief if he who entertains it is to pass for a Christian. Divine Revelation becomes a source of such propositions, and in that character it now stands as an Authority for theological thought. Even the Apologists of the second century regarded it in this sense as the source of truth and of all true knowledge, not to speak at all of those of later times. In the view of all of them it ranks as a leading merit of the Christian knowledge they have now at length gained above their former philosophical knowledge that it rests on Divine communication, and no longer on mere human conjecture.

What in those times occupied the seat of Authority was Holy Scripture. To speak more correctly, it was the Old Testament in the first place, and along with it the words of the Lord as they were given in the tradition fixed for us by the Synoptic Gospels. In the writings of the Apologists it sometimes actually appears as if Moses and the prophets were the proper teachers and masters of Christians. The Divinity of the Lord is principally taken into account too as a guarantee for the trustworthiness of His doctrine. The theological skill of those teachers of the Church mainly

consists in developing out of the Old Testament the lines of thought which were dominated by the idea of the Logos, a process in which the Alexandrian wisdom of Philo had anticipated them, and as to which it had pointed out the way. At a later date the Apostolical writings also attained the same dignity, that of being an authoritative source of divine truth. We find it so even in Irenæus and Tertullian, although the New Testament canon is not yet fixed in its entire compass as now existing. But that makes no difference in the fact itself: for a historically accurate acceptance and adequate realisation of the Apostolical lines of thought those theologians are no longer in a fitting position. Rather are the thoughts of the Apostles drawn into a connection which was unknown to themselves, that which formed the basis of the theology of the early Church and the presupposition of its interpretation of Scripture.

But there exists a natural connection between the view of the principle of Authority explained above, as it prevailed in the early times, and this more exact definition of it, or specification of the historical product which has to count for an Authority. If Christianity is above all a new species of knowledge, or at all events if it is viewed as such in so far as it is the object of theology; if in consistency with this Revelation is a supernatural communication of knowledge; there exists the necessity of possessing that source of knowledge as something positively defined. Now the *Written* Word responds to that necessity better than oral tradition. Thus it came about quite naturally that Holy Scripture, or the Old Testament, as the case might be, as it had

been from the commencement the sacred Authority of the Church, occupied also the seat of Authority in theology. Moreover, the first representatives of theology were disposed by their antecedents to regard *prophetic* writings in particular as the proper source of divine revelation. For in the mental environment in which they drew their origin, divination in particular was known and prized as the channel of such revelation. For them, therefore, the prophetic writings were what they required, what met their claims with regard to divine revelation; and in a wider sense this was true of the Old Testament writings in general, which they referred in their totality to *prophetically* inspired authors. With them ranked immediately the words of the incarnate Logos, who along with the Spirit itself was described as the source of prophetic inspiration. For how should *His* word not have divine authority, when it was His influence in reality that first established the authority of those others and of their writings? On the other hand, a longer period had still to elapse before those apostolical writings which were framed for special occasions could attain to like significance. Indeed, it was not any theological necessity whatever nor any theoretical consideration that led to that result, but the practical necessity, in resisting the Gnostic usurpation, of claiming for the growing Catholic Church and for it alone the character of being true to Christianity.

Moved by this necessity, the Church teachers collected the apostolical remains and brought them together along with the Gospel as a New Testament canon standing alongside of the Old Testament. Thus the

Gnostics, who had anticipated them in the establishment of a New Testament canon, were deprived of a dangerous weapon. On the other hand, what apostolical writings the Church knew or believed it knew were by this means brought under the dominion of an exegesis moulded by the growing theology of the Church.[1]

But now this points already to the circumstances which brought it about, that in truth oral tradition acquired greater significance after all than the written records. It was *it* to begin with more than these that formed the medium effecting the implication of the Christian faith in the origin of dogma. Apart from that, the use of Scripture was of a pre-eminently arbitrary character, so that an attestation of the exegesis of it which was presented in the Church had to be sought outside Scripture.

Doubtless in the contest with the Gnostics Irenæus repeatedly makes an attempt to establish the justification of the Church's exegesis simply by the fact that it corresponds to the historical sense of the text. And there, as opposed to the fantastic notions of the Gnostics, he is perfectly right, even if judged on purely objective and historical principles. But whoever knows the true relation of dogma to Holy Scripture, will not be surprised, but will find it quite conceivable, that even in the minds of the ecclesiastical theologians themselves there could not exist that confident certainty of accurate knowledge which grows out of the simple historical interpretation of Scripture. For although they were convinced that they derived their doctrine from Scripture, yet arbitrariness was too

[1] Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. p. 304 ff.

deeply rooted in their method of exegesis for them to have been capable of arriving at such confidence. And that method of exegesis again corresponded so closely to their view of the authority of Scripture, that they were not able to rise above it. Thus even in the internal circumstances of theology there was sufficient occasion given for seeking outside Scripture a guarantee for the interpretation of Scripture which was placed at the foundation of the Church's teaching. If, now, to crown all, there was added the fact that the Gnostics also appealed on their side to Scripture, which they expounded by means of a method that was indeed a caricature of the Church's method, but was yet allied to it, the occasion mentioned grew into an urgent practical necessity. But where else, in consistency with the logic of the faith reposed in revelation, could the guarantee for the interpretation of Scripture be sought except in the oral tradition derived from the Apostles? An appeal to this tradition was so clearly implied by the nature of the case, that the Gnostics fell back in the last resort no less than the others on secret apostolical traditions in their midst.

Thus from that form of the principle of Authority which was necessary in those times, we have discovered *what* was regarded as the Authority. It had to be a source of supernaturally communicated knowledge. For that purpose written records were better adapted than oral tradition. If, over and above, the Christian Church possessed prophetic writings as a sacred legacy of the Old Testament Church, it immediately resulted that they had to be counted the sacred Authority. Then at a later period, in consequence

of practical necessity, and at the same time under the influence of the logic of the faith reposed in revelation, the New Testament canon came to stand by the side of the Old Testament as of equal rank. But from the fact that they were treated as supernatural sources of a new kind of knowledge, there was already a character impressed on all those writings which stands in contradiction to their real nature. Further, the new knowledge that was derived from them was in truth *at the same time* of a different origin. Thus in reality the centre of gravity lay finally not in those sacred Scriptures but in oral tradition, to which there was an appeal in turn for the accuracy of the interpretation of Scripture.

Such is the origin of the so-called *principle of Tradition*. But it meant from the first nothing but the exaltation of ecclesiastical authority above that of Holy Scripture. That is implied by the very nature of the case. For among intelligent people there can be no doubt of this, that written tradition deserves preference before oral, that the trustworthiness of the latter must be tested by its essential agreement with the written records, while the oral tradition ought not conversely to be made the principle of the exegesis of Holy Scripture. Thus, if we take the principle of Tradition at its word, it ends properly speaking in an absurdity. Still no one will doubt that it must have a rational meaning, since it assumes so important a position in the history of the Christian Church. And that meaning is quite clearly brought out too, if one raises the inevitable question, who or what again guarantees the trustworthiness of oral

tradition, and has for answer that it is the *Church*. At first, doubtless, it strikes us as like building on history again when we hear from Irenæus and Tertullian that the churches founded by the apostles and their bishops are the intermediaries that deliver and guarantee to the Church of the present the correct apostolical tradition. But even in the case of these Fathers of the second century, the historical argument is transformed, imperceptibly as it were, into a dogmatic one. In place of the bishops in the apostolic churches, there appear the bishops as successors of the apostles, as holders of the infallible apostolical ministry. In the well-known passage in Irenæus at the beginning of the third Book of his great work directed against the Gnostics, where he exalts the tradition of the Roman Church above all else, there is in addition the impetus plainly enough communicated that led to the whole of the development that succeeded, and which has only reached its consummation in our own days. The passage also shows plainly with what necessity the principle of ecclesiastical authority was developed from that of tradition, viz. that the supreme authority of the Church and of its ministerial office is concealed behind the principle of tradition; what the word "Tradition" purports is insisted on only in so far as it imposes on that office the duty of preserving historical continuity.

In its *material* aspect Tradition was understood to mean first of all the *regula fidei*. Now, if we contrast the latter with the main conclusions of Gnostic wisdom, it is undeniable that in comparison with them it represents the preaching of the Apostles. Indeed, what it contains belongs for the most part as a permanent

possession to the content of the Christian faith. But it is not thereby denied that the principle of Tradition in its *material* aspect is nothing but the exaltation of the body of thought which was consolidated in dogma above Divine Revelation and Holy Scripture. For the *regula fidei* is anything but an exact and complete expression of the Christian faith. Precisely the most characteristic elements, those which distinguish Christianity most positively from other religions, are not asserted in that attempt at a formula. But that can only be explained by the fact that from the first the foreign tissues of thought which were alluded to determined the conception of Christianity which was adopted. In strict consistency, the further development of the *regula fidei* led to ecclesiastical dogma. The fact that the conclusions of the former acquire the significance of the rule of faith, has thus the meaning stated above. And the farther the development extended, the more distinctly was that meaning brought out.

If we gather up all these considerations, it is plain how from the numerous influences all working together in the first centuries that principle of authority was formed which afterwards governed the succeeding development. With the Catholic Church itself there was established at the same time the authority of the theological thought sanctioned within it, viz. the body of Dogma that was current in the Church, regarding which it is candidly supposed that it is in perfect agreement with Holy Scripture. And this issue is founded on the nature of the case. The Christian religion rests on the supposition that now the truth

no longer requires to be sought, but is supplied in the historical revelation of God. As soon, therefore, as the Christian Church was set up in the world and a theology arose, the principle of authority also required to find a place in it. If in its true sense, in which it guarantees the dependence of faith on revelation, it had in the existing condition of spiritual life to remain as good as inoperative, it naturally assumed another form, in which even under the circumstances of the time it really came to be enforced.

But while the principle of authority is doubtless necessary and indispensable, it cannot after all, at least it cannot permanently, be the last word on the question of *scientific* principle. It rather itself requires confirmation in its turn. And that was already attempted in the early Church. But in that matter we must distinguish if it is the negotiation between such parties as both lay claim to the name of Christian that is concerned, or if it is a question of defence by means of strictly Apologetic argumentation as against those who are without. In the former case the question is, by what principle it has to be settled what *constitutes Christian truth;* in the latter the *truth of Christianity has to be demonstrated* on grounds that are universally admitted.

Now, as concerns the first point, Irenæus and Tertullian maintained as against the Gnostics that all depends on divine revelation, especially on the apostolic preaching and the tradition in the churches founded by the apostles. In so doing they express in their own way, and consistently with the circumstances of their time, a principle the validity of which

can never be permanently questioned in the Christian Church. Still, however true this is, the matter does not come further under consideration here. The question here is, What were the *universal grounds* on which the teachers of the early Church justified the principle of authority as a principle of theological thought?

Here then must be named first in order the proof from the prophecies of the Old Testament which were fulfilled in Christ. Scarcely one of the Apologists omits to discuss the situation in this regard, and thence to prove the truth of the divine revelation in which Christians believe. This procedure is followed, *e.g.*, in in a very thorough-going manner by Justin. On the other hand, a similar use is not made of the miracles, because in magical arts and miracles of demons something resembling these confronted them on heathen territory. The miraculous works of the Lord rather required on that account to be defended against the conjecture that they were nothing but magical arts. And this was done simply by giving prominence to the prophecies and the fulfilment they found in Christ.

The presupposition of this proof is that even those to whom it is to be offered believe in the existence of the Godhead and in its power over the course of history. If they do not so believe, the connecting links are wanting for the whole argumentation. But if they do, they will also have to recognise that revelation as true, *i.e.* as truly divine, among the palpable characteristics of which is found the undoubted manifestation of such power. If now that applies to the Biblical revelation of God — simply because of the

prophecies and their fulfilment—that revelation has divine authority supporting it, and every one must recognise the truth of the announcements so revealed. Viewed generally, the method therefore is this, that certain characteristics are pointed to, in the revelation that is vindicated as having divine authority, which guarantee the divinity of it, and thereby its authority, according to the conviction of *universal reason*. The Apologists, however, could count in reality on such a conviction as one which was widely prevalent. It was an element of the body of thought which constituted the popular philosophy formerly described. Thus the basis of this proof in turn is that body of thought. By means of it it can be proved rational to believe in a revelation that presents such characteristics, and to recognise its authority. And it is not merely as against those who do not yet belong to the Christian Church that this argumentation is in place. The Christian himself also, in so far as he shares in the universal reason of the time, will by this means justify his faith in revelation to his own mind as a rational faith. Or if the *Christian* as such does not feel the necessity of a justification of his faith, the *theologian* at all events will.

If now this proof belongs to the rational side of dogma, the question naturally arises, whether the speculative mystical side of it did not also offer connecting links for a proof bearing upon the same issue. That cannot, however, be asserted forthwith. The latter side, generally speaking, was not so well adapted as the former to occupy a leading place in Apologetics. Besides, it connects Christianity, *i.e.* here the faith

reposed in the Christian revelation, with the general life of thought, by means of the assumption of a relative revelation of the Logos in Greek philosophy. But that is a line of thought in which the principle of authority has no significance. It rather leads people to pay no special regard to the *authority* of revelation, but to see in it the completion of that truth of reason which is attainable by man.[1] Yet we must not leave unnoticed what in later days, when this mediating thought had long lost all significance, served the same purpose in speculative mystical Gnosis itself. Or at least we must notice the idea relevant to this matter which had already begun to be heard of in the theology of this time.

It is this. The chief weakening effect of sin appeared in man's intellectual faculty, and the redemption through Christ repairs this damage in particular. This applies to the intellectual faculty in its relation to God and divine things. Sin, however, has struck such deep roots in man, that even the redeemed person is not qualified for a *perfect* knowledge of God. He finds himself therefore invited to complete his knowledge by a simple acceptance of what is authoritatively offered to him in divine revelation. And that course is rational, because he perceives that his reason, being weakened by sin, remains defective, and because he finds at the same time by experience that revelation,

[1] This idea was doubtless not unknown to the originators of the argument from prophecy themselves. But the line of thought developed in that argument enters in its tendency and aim into so positive an analogy with the later proofs for the principle of authority, that it could itself even—as the commencement of the series—be regarded from the same point of view.

so far as he lays hold of it, yields him full satisfaction. However, that is a line of thought which at this time, in the creative period of the history of dogma, is only indicated, and has by no means gained decisive significance. It only attained such significance much later under completely altered conditions of mental life.

These proofs for the principle of authority are likewise closely connected with that conception of it according to which a supernatural source of knowledge forms the authority. The first especially is regarded solely in connection with the thought that religion is a matter of knowledge, or at least that that side of religion can be apprehended by itself, and that it is it that falls to be considered by theology. The case is somewhat different with the second proof (if in view of what follows it is permissible to speak of such proof), because in the speculative mystical connection it is never quite lost from view that knowledge is always meant at the same time to be something which is of significance in the practical sense. Only of course the latter, as soon as it is understood in the sense of the Christian religion, can never serve to prove the subjection of the intellect to a supernatural source of knowledge to be necessary. For in Christianity it is understood as a matter of course that it is one's lasting duty to appropriate divine revelation *wholly and entirely* by the faith of one's heart, and that revelation contains nothing that does not involve that duty. But thereby the above-mentioned connection of the necessary finite limitation of our intellectual faculty with sin is *eo ipso* destroyed. If now this is really the fundamental idea of that proof, and if its object is to secure a rational

basis for the simple acceptance of *intellectual propositions which are not understood*, it no longer moves on the lines of the Christian faith. In other words, even it has as its presupposition the transformation of the faith into objective knowledge, and views the principle of authority as it answers to that presupposition.

And it is the general purpose of this study to point out the change which the Christian principle of authority, as furnished by divine revelation, was subjected to when it was implicated with the existing organism of mental life on the occasion of the origin of dogma. I proceed to draw attention at the close to a further consequence inevitably associated with this process.

It is this, viz., that the significance of the principle of Authority is not restricted to the sphere of religion and religious faith, but is extended to science as a whole. The supernatural source of knowledge is made the supreme court of appeal for *all* human knowledge and *all* scientific investigation. Tertullian asserts that even as an absolute principle in his work *De anima* (c. i.). He establishes it by saying that God as the Creator of the soul knows best what concerns it, and that from the source of divine instruction, therefore, *i.e.* from Holy Scripture, the most trustworthy knowledge regarding it is to be derived. But it is easily seen that no object of scientific research is conceivable, regarding which the same thing may not be said on the same grounds.

The nature of Holy Scripture, which is certainly no mere compendium of dogma, and therefore contains conclusions and information on all sorts of things in

this world which have nothing to do with divine revelation, specially suggested such an inference. On the other hand, there was not much involved in that inference as long as the scientific knowledge of the world in Christendom did not extend beyond the horizon of the sacred writers, or at all events not considerably. Of course, when it came to be otherwise, a great danger was involved in this consequence for the principle of authority itself. And it is a necessary connection which appears here. If the view of the principle which has been mentioned is correct, then this consequence is inevitable. The circumstance that one cannot really adhere to the latter must then appear as a want of religious conviction, as a renunciation of the real authority of divine revelation. When this has come about, one can only recover the full confidence and steadfastness of Christian faith if one gives up the whole connection in which the principle of authority assumed the form it has, a course too for which even apart from this particular point there is occasion enough in every regard.

The activity of the early Church which resulted in dogma, and the scientific theology of the Middle Ages, are separated by centuries from one another. In that intervening time Traditionalism reigned. The preservation and collection of what existed seemed the principal duty; the spiritual unfruitfulness of the time did not allow an independent and active life to appear.

Then in the Middle Ages, when a new scientific life awoke, the situation in theology and the Church had become different from what it was at the time of the

formation of dogma. Men were no longer concerned with settling what the Church should teach; that was now established; the Church's construction of doctrine had reached a certain termination. And the further construction, where that took place, as in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, was effected not so much by the theologians as by the popular faith. In theology, on the other hand, there now prevailed the *scholastic* interest in dogma, as a body which confronted subjective thought as a rounded whole. We can say perhaps that theological activity, from being a matter of the Church, had come to be a matter of the school[1]—in such wise, it is true, that the Church as a matter of course even yet formed the background, while its officials occasionally rushed with strong arm into the arena of scientific discussion.

On this soil, now, the *principle of authority* described above attained its full significance. Here, indeed, it first became strictly what its name purports. Frequently the relation of it to religious and ecclesiastical life passes quite into the background. Indeed, it appears plainly as a general scientific principle that many truths are ascertained on the path of authority as others are known by means of reason. The proper *fundamental problem* of Mediæval theology, or more strictly of the *theory of principles in theology* during the Middle Ages, thus comes to be the question how authority and reason are related to each other. Even where the discussion relates to faith and knowledge, this same question, strictly speaking, is meant. For by

[1] Cf. Baur, *Die christliche Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit und Menschwerdung Gottes*, ii. p. 348.

faith the Mediæval theologians understand assent to the authoritatively delivered doctrine of the Church. And knowledge is the truth which, as resting on grounds, is discovered by reason. Not as if the above-mentioned meaning were the only one which faith has for them. But it is the first and readiest, and is just what is chiefly kept in view in the comparison with knowledge. Relatively to this, the other idea that faith brings the Christian into an intimate vital connection with what is believed passes into the background, and the former characteristic is of chief importance by far.

But now, if one takes his stand wholly and entirely on the ground of the scientific school, the principle of authority appears in the form which it then assumed to be simply absurd. Science seeks the truth: how can it come to terms with a principle according to which the truth is antecedently given as complete, and ought to be accepted, not because it is recognisable as truth, but *because* it is authoritatively delivered? Doubtless in the condition of science in those days, the circumstance in which this opposition to authority has its proper justification is not realised in its pure and simple form, the circumstance, viz., that it is the constraint of fact, *i.e.* of the object of knowledge, to which alone science can yield. And of course it is not realised in its full force for the reason that in philosophy knowledge, science, as we have seen, was amalgamated with religion, and in consequence of that was conceived as a sort of free production of the spirit of man, kindred as it was with God, or as a production of reason. Yet although in that view, connecting links

were offered for the principle of authority as implied in divinely communicated truth, on the other hand something was included in it that made the principle seem wholly inadmissible, and which could impart nothing less than religious warmth to the opposition roused against it. For is not reason the divine part in man, and must not the truth revealed by God stand the test of man's reason? Thus, it is true, the opposition of reason to authority takes a different turn in the circumstances of science as it was then situated, but loses nothing of its force and effect for all that.

Rightly understood, however, this opposition of reason applies essentially only *to the formal principle as such.* Nothing prevents reason at any given time from completely recognising what is authoritatively announced as truth, and indeed maintaining and defending this on its part as well. Only it does so in the case where that happens because it acknowledges the very same thing to be rational. Of necessity the opposition is directed only against the formal principle.

What is antecedently probable, history goes on to show, viz. that such misgivings arose even in the Middle Ages. We meet with them at once in the first scientific theologian of the Middle Ages, viz. John Scotus Erigena. Not, it is true, in the sense that he combats the principle of Authority or even denies its significance. All that goes by the name of theology stands too much under the sway of ecclesiastical authority to allow of that. But they do appear in this way, that in coming to terms with the principle of Authority he destroys it as a principle, and establishes the primacy of reason.

Erigena teaches[1] that true reason and true authority cannot contradict each other, as they both proceed from the same source of divine wisdom.[2] But he defines the relation more exactly by saying that true authority is nothing but the truth discovered by the power of reason.[3] For when this truth was first discovered it made an overwhelming impression on mankind, who were engrossed with sensuous ideas. They therefore inferred a supernatural revelation, and accepted the truth on authority. And now that procedure was not something isolated and transitory, something that might soon have been reversed, or have been destined to be lost sight of altogether. For most people it is the end of the matter. They are not capable of recognising the pure unveiled truth; it is accessible to them only in the form of authority. In authority those of mature mind, on the other hand, recognise rational truth. It is only on that account that they accept it, and consequently they do so only so far as reason recognises itself in it. Thus it is necessary always to argue in a twofold manner, resting on grounds of reason as well as on grounds of authority. The former method applies to the intellectual classes, the latter to the sense-bound mass of the people.[4]

These statements contain to all appearance a reconciliation between authority and reason. Indeed, they can also serve to establish an *actual* agreement of the

[1] Reuter, *Geschichte der religiösen Aufklärung im Mittelalter*, i. p. 51 ff.

[2] Joh. Scotus Erigena, *De Divisione Naturæ*, i. c. 66; *Opera* (in Migne, *Patrol. Series Lat.* 122), p. 511 B.

[3] L. l. i. c. 69, *Opera*, p. 513 B.

[4] L. l. i. c. 56, *Opera*, p. 499 B, 500 C; c. 63, *Opera*, p. 508 D; i. c. 67, *Opera*, p. 512 B; iv. c. 9, *Opera*, p. 781 D.

two principles, especially where the reason of the scientific person accords better with the true meaning of the creed than Erigena's theology can be said to have done. Looked at more closely, of course, these statements destroy the principle of authority as such. That alone is compatible with them which proves itself rational in presence of the sovereign decree of reason. But it is conceivable how a similar view of the matter reappeared not unfrequently, even among those who stood substantially nearer the Church's doctrine than did the philosopher of the ninth century.

At first, it is true, Authority remained inviolate as the only decisive court of appeal. The question of its relation to reason had not yet become a subject of interest *to people generally*. In this matter Erigena stands alone in his time, as has often been shown. It was only with the new outburst of scientific life about the middle of the eleventh century that the question really came to be widely stirred. The occasion for this was offered by the dispute between Berengarius and Lanfranc concerning the Lord's Supper. The circumstance that in that dispute Berengarius adhered to a work of John Scotus does not come further into consideration, as that work is demonstrably spurious.[1] However, it is possible that he also knew the genuine writings of Erigena; and at all events there is a real connection between the two in their judgment on authority and reason. For Berengarius too believed that the discussion which introduces grounds of reason stands incomparably higher than that which falls back

[1] Gieseler, *Church History*, ii. 1 (3rd German edition), p. 103, note *f.*; p. 236, note *a*.

on grounds of authority. According to him, whoever makes light of dialectics, makes light of reason, and whoever does that abandons his honour, since man's likeness to God consists in his reason; the latter recognises itself in authoritative truth and therefore assents to it.[1] But if along with this other utterances are found in Berengarius in which authority is recognised in plain terms, something of the sort is not wanting in Erigena also.[2] It only proves that those theologians had by no means quite outgrown the conceptions of their time, and does not compromise the fact, which alone matters here, that opposition to the principle of authority as such was raised just then.

The controversy in which Berengarius was involved appears to have had the effect that large classes of people occupied themselves zealously with the question of principles. And for many of them authority did not permanently suffice as the sole support of faith. That appears plainly too from the fact, *e.g.*, that Anselm in some of his most eminent works mentions doubting friends who caused him to write.[3] And what was so honest a reverer of ecclesiastical authority as Anselm, who was at the same time so eminent a thinker, what was he himself able to give forth for the defence of authority as against such misgivings?

Strictly speaking, nothing really but the pious conviction that true reason must arrive by its own power at the same results that are presented once for all in

[1] Gieseler, *Church History*, ii. 1 p. 247, note *a*.

[2] Reuter, *loc. cit.* i. p. 109, p. 58.

[3] *Monologium, Præf.* (*Opera* [Migne 158], i. p. 143), *Cur Deus Homo*, i. c. 1 (p. 361); *De fide Trinitatis*, c. i. (p. 262); Reuter, *loc. cit.* i. p. 129.

the authoritatively delivered doctrine of the Church; nothing but a vigorous attempt to demonstrate this in all its bearings with brilliant dialectics; nothing but an eloquent invitation to think in this matter as he did, and to recognise the force of his argumentations. But with all this there is as good as nothing accomplished at all for the defence of the *principle of authority*; all that he says amounts in the end to the *postulate* that the two functions are compatible with each other. His proper apology consists in dialectical argumentations, and proves that on the ground of the scientific school the claim of reason can only be met by using its own means, *i.e.* only by recognising its primacy, if not expressly at least actually and tacitly.

Or is the case otherwise with the renowned and often quoted maxim of Anselm, *Credo ut intelligam?*[1] Does it really contain an *organic union* of the two principles?[2] Many have adopted his maxim in a sense in which it means that in matters of religious truth practical faith is the presupposition of theoretical knowledge. Certainly Anselm too as a Christian understood by faith not simply an outward submission to the doctrinal authority of the Church, but above all personal saving faith.[3] But it may be confidently affirmed that that conviction has no further influence on his scientific method, that even the well-known statement about belief and knowledge is not

[1] *Proslogium*, c. i. (p. 227 C); *De fide Trinitatis; Prooemium* (p. 261 A), and frequently.

[2] Hasse, in his work, *Anselm von Canterbury*, appears to suppose that; cf. ii. p. 34 ff.

[3] Cf. *e.g. Proslogium*, c. i. (p. 225 seq.).

to be interpreted from that standpoint.[1] The course which Anselm actually follows furnishes conclusive testimony against such an interpretation. The *fides* which he means there is nothing but subjection to the *fides quæ creditur*, the recognition of the authoritatively delivered creed. That on the basis of this faith there has to be an advance to knowledge, means only that as the sequel a proof by means of the resources of reason is attempted. Both functions stand side by side. The truth first believed on authority then becomes the object of proof for the autonomous reason, which now on its side does the best it can. Nowhere is even an attempt made to build the articles of theology on articles of faith such as are dictated by practice, not to speak of deriving them from the practical motives of faith. The argumentations of Anselm are proofs of reason, and of reason, too, *unfettered by suppositions*, in support of the statements of the creed.[2]

Now, Anselm, it is true, understands the matter in this way, that authority has to be accepted unconditionally, that the recognition of it cannot be made dependent on knowledge previously acquired—even one who boasts of knowledge has to regard it as something subordinate in comparison with faith, and the proofs of reason must always be enforced only temporarily, till

[1] Cf. Landerer, in Herzog, *R.E.* 1st ed. 13, p. 670, and especially Reuter, *loc. cit.* p. 297 ff.

[2] Cf. *Monologium* and *Proslogium*. Most distinctly in the preface to *Cur Deus Homo* (*Opera*, p. 361 f.): "Ac tandem remoto Christo (quasi nunquam aliquid fuerit de illo) probat (scil. liber i.) rationibus necessariis, esse impossibile, ullum hominem salvari sine illo. In secundo autem libro similiter, quasi nihil sciatur de Christo, monstratur non minus aperta ratione et veritate. . . ."

something better is adduced or a different decision is given by authority.[1] But, on the other hand also, it must be admitted, he does not want to have rational knowledge considered superfluous, something that one may seek or not as he pleases. He rather holds it to be a mark of negligence if one does not concern himself with it in the second place. It is made the *duty of theology* to seek and adduce by way of addition proofs of reason for the truth which is believed.[2]

But that this endeavour now will succeed is simply nothing but a supposition. There is nothing but the postulate that the truth accepted on authority is of such a kind that it can be demonstrated, and that reason approves itself as the instrument adapted for that purpose. The sole guarantee which is offered for authority on this course adopted by Anselm, is the demonstrative power of his dialectical argumentations. The principle of authority suffers even in the hands of this ardent champion of it, so far as he is at the same time a scientific theologian. For if it is made a duty for the theologian to seek proofs subsequent to faith, it is by no means made out that by the sovereign word of a master he can be brought back to the standpoint of mere authority, if they seem to him not to hold good. It is rather the simple consequence of adopting the new standpoint that the judgment of reason is regarded as the final appeal.[3]

In reality this seems to have been the result. For Anselm was followed by Abelard, who represented

[1] *De fide Trinitatis*, c. i. (p. 262 C); *Cur Deus Homo*, i. c. ii. (p. 363 C).
[2] *Cur Deus Homo*, i. c. ii. (p. 362 B).
[3] Cf. Reuter, *loc. cit.* p. 132.

even avowedly the rights of reason. In a still more positive manner than Erigena and Berengarius he demanded argumentation on rational grounds. He held that if the mysteries of the Catholic faith are to be withheld from rational discussion and to be believed merely on authority, the faith is in that case identified as regards its foundation with every popular belief, even with idolatry.[1] The honour of the faith accordingly demands that its truth should be proved by reason. Indeed, in the *Dialogus* Abelard makes the philosopher declare that in the present day only such proof is of any value, and in this remark perhaps he gives a glimpse of his own view.[2] We also obtain the same explanation from him as to the origin of authority as from Erigena: by the impression which it made on the unreasoning crowd, rational truth gained the reputation of authority.[3] Then doubtless with him too there are not wanting declarations of an opposite kind—but on this point all that is necessary has already been stated above.

Now, in what is said it is by no means implied as yet that Abelard assumed a negative attitude with regard to the creed. In the abstract he might have regarded himself, so far as this principle is concerned, as bound by the *content* of authority—quite as much as an Anselm. In reality, he assumed of course a different attitude on the question from the latter. But this matter does not come further into considera-

[1] *Introductio ad Theologiam*, ii. (*Opera*, ed. Cousin, ii. p. 78).

[2] *Dialogus inter philosophum, Judæum et Christianum* (*Opera*, ii. p. 671, seq.); Reuter, *loc. cit.* p. 223.

[3] *Ibid.* 672. *Theologia Christiana*, iii. (*ibid.* pp. 460, 462); Reuter, *loc. cit.* p. 225.

tion here. This much is clear enough, that on the question of principle he asserted the primacy of reason above authority. And this Abelard was the celebrated man of his time, scholars flocking to him from all quarters. In his conclusions, therefore, we have not the private opinion of an individual teacher, but ideas which obtained through him the widest currency.

Thus the truth is borne out, that a properly scientific treatment of theology could not be arrived at without the objection to the principle of authority being uttered in it. Regarded from the point of view of the scientific school, that principle must have seemed in the form it then assumed to be simply absurd. The controversy on the matter of principles, confined strictly to that ground, must issue in an express or tacit recognition of reason as the determinative principle of all science. One comes to terms with authority by explaining what it announces as the veiled truth of reason. Or one respects its statements in their proper sense by daring to prove their truth. But whichever way is chosen, the primacy of reason is established without question in either case.

If, notwithstanding this, the principle of authority maintained its supremacy in the following period as decidedly as ever, that was not the result of a stronger scientific counter-current, but it was the reaction of the Church against the freedom of the theological school that led to it.[1] Like Berengarius before, Abelard was most keenly affected by that reaction. And this time the effect was more lasting than in the

[1] Gieseler, *Church History*, 3rd German edition, ii. 2, p. 399 f.

controversy with Berengarius. For in the succeeding period no theological school attained supremacy which did not in one sense or another represent the standpoint of authority. Roger Bacon expressed similar thoughts to those of Abelard, only to find at once Abelard's doom.[1]

From this it appears that in connection with this question of principle a wholly different interest from that of the scientific school also came into consideration. But if we examine the question from this other point of view, viz. from that of the ecclesiastical interest, it is presented in quite a different aspect. Right and wrong are immediately distributed not merely in a different but in an entirely opposite manner. The body of ecclesiastical dogma, which forms the content of the principle of authority, signifies for the Church something quite different from what it does for the scientific school. While it seems in the latter to be an intruder with whom reason must seek to come to terms somehow, on ecclesiastical ground it is master of the house, the prize of faith in presence of which the judgment of subjective reason must be suppressed as something arbitrary and unfounded. But this side of the question also deserves to be examined somewhat more closely.

Manifestly the Church in upholding dogma as inviolable thereby represented the interest of the Christian religion. That is true first in the purely *formal* sense. Christianity cannot be handed over to the experiments of that reason which occupies

[1] Reuter, *loc. cit.* ii. p. 67 f.

and must occupy the position of a pioneer, which is only seeking the truth. It must rather be measured by the standard of divine revelation and by it alone, *i.e.* as the revelation is something given, Christianity itself also must be established once for all as given truth. Any other legitimate motive for changes within the ecclesiastical domain there cannot be, besides the single one which lies in a *better understanding of revelation.* Reason has here no joint word to say. But not merely in the formal sense was the defence of dogma justified as against the criticism of reason. The same is true in the *material* sense as well. For if dogma is certainly not a pure expression of revealed truth, still it cannot be denied that in those times it came nearest to it. Or should that rather be asserted with regard to the conclusions of Scotus Erigena, or say those of Abelard? We cannot resist the impression that in the case of the one as well as the other, although in different ways, there was a displacement of Christian truth, that therefore the opponents of those men were within their rights when they combated them in the name of Christianity and of the Church.

Now it is true that they did not on that account require to rest in mere Traditionalism. Indeed, a man like Anselm was able as a matter of fact to reconcile both interests, the ecclesiastical and the scientific. While that was no settlement of the matter of principle strictly speaking, yet ecclesiastical theology could continue in his own paths and so satisfy the opposite needs concurrently. And was not a retreat from those paths, ecclesiastically considered, an error and loss?

At the same time, however right that seems, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that it harmonises more with the mediæval as well as with the modern Catholic Church than with our position as Evangelicals, to allow oneself to be satisfied with the *letter as such in religion.* For that Church pure doctrine according to the Word of God is not, as for us evangelical Christians, the centre from which all pious and ecclesiastical life is regulated. According to the Catholic conception, dogma is only an element—although a very important one, still only *a single* element alongside of others—in the great economy of the Church. The popular mysticism characteristic of its worship and the moral discipline of life by means of the confessional, have in Catholicism the same significance, and indeed for the piety of the people, and perhaps not for that merely, greater significance than doctrine. Thus for it it is not at all so important to have a species of doctrine that can serve as a guide for faith and so for piety, applicable even to particular and more delicate relations. Rather it is chiefly as a component part of the organism of worship that dogma gains its practical significance for the communion of the pious. And that is a position which it can quite well occupy as a fixed tradition, as a sacred letter, perhaps indeed best of all in that form. The mysterious statements, often not understood, correspond directly to the mysterious acts by which the pious feeling of the Catholic people is kindled.

Only from this position does the proper light fall on the attitude of those theologians who, like Lanfranc, although they were themselves masters of the art of dialectics, still preferred not to have it applied to the

sacred verities. In theology, according to their view, we should stop with grounds of authority. It is safest, they hold, to cleave as closely as possible here to the Fathers, and not to depart a foot-breadth from them.[1] For dogma itself too is of such a nature that it is by no means possible to place piety in a direct relation to all parts of it. In these circumstances it is advisable rather to regard dogma as a mystery, and so to enter into a personal relation to it as a whole, by treasuring itself as an object of piety (not as an expression of pious belief). And then a theology fits this connection best which with sincere and pious sympathy supports tradition as a whole, simply adhering to it accordingly with the utmost exactness in details.

In the controversy led by Berengarius, in which the pros and cons on the question of principle were first discussed, the weight of tradition fell strangely enough, it is true, by no means exclusively into the scale of the opponents of Berengarius. With perfect right the latter too could cite sainted authorities in his behalf, and he did not fail to do so. But that in spite of this he was defeated cannot really surprise us. For in the first place the doctrine of Transubstantiation lies in the direct line of Catholic dogma, and particularly also of Catholic worship. In so far the authority of tradition was against Berengarius after all. Then too—and the fact is connected with this matter—the interest of ecclesiastical politics decided against him, as soon as the contested doctrine was generally prevalent and firmly rooted in the faith of the people, or their superstition, as the case might be. But that again is

[1] Hasse, *Anselm von Canterbury*, ii. pp. 26 f., 28 f.

only another mode in which the principle of authority operates.

As is well known, the most noted representative of that interest, the subsequent Pope Gregory VII., sought to protect Berengarius as long as possible, but gave him up without compunction when the general opinion turned against him. He might perhaps have shared the doubts of Berengarius, and held his doctrine generally to be the better established. But that was no longer taken in the very slightest degree into consideration by him, as soon as it became manifest that by this partisanship he himself endangered his position in the Church, and thereby the reformation of it which he contemplated.[1]

From this position again there falls a noteworthy light on the question of principle itself. Berengarius was indisputably right in his objection to the doctrine of Transubstantiation which was being established. So after him very many were right who combated irrational and in the end even unchristian conclusions of the Catholic Church system. But of what account are such subjective misgivings of individuals, contrasted with the great stream of ecclesiastical development and the general interests concerned in it, as cherished by the Church and the piety which she rules? Those doubtless are to be pitied who have once set their soul on such a correct conception of matters, and in the conflict which they stir by so doing succumb physically or morally. But we must try to understand the fact that on the side of authority too and its representatives there is an ideal element

[1] Reuter, *loc. cit.* i. p. 120 ff.

at work, that *on the ground of Catholicism* they too can take up their position with an *honest* title. This can be the case even though the opposition to ecclesiastical authority has to represent a truer expression of the Catholic faith than that authority itself. For in the end what does it matter — and that is the reverse side to the maintenance of the letter in religion, and striking enough it is—in the end what does it matter for Catholic piety what the *precise* content of the particular articles of dogma may be? Whatever way that content goes, if ecclesiastical authority only remains inviolate and rules men's minds, the most important end is thereby secured under all circumstances.

In this way, if we look at the question from the ecclesiastical point of view, the standpoint of authority had right on its side. Dogma was after all the most genuine expression of Christian truth that was then to be had; further, it is of the essence of Catholic piety to hold fast to the traditional deliverances simply as a mystery; and finally, a theology framed with that intention responded too in the best manner to the interest of the Church and of its dominion over the mediæval world. Now, all those interests found their most eloquent expression in the mouth of him who in opposition to Abelard represented the standpoint of authority, in the mouth of St. Bernard. For we cannot deny that he really defended the ideal right of that standpoint with sincere conviction and religious enthusiasm.[1] He did it at the same time with such

[1] Neander, *Der heilige Bernhard und sein Zeitalter*, p. 260. There, in a letter of Bernard's to the Pope relating to Abelard, we read :—"Novum

effect that in the sphere of ecclesiastical theology the opposition was struck dumb. In the following period, which is wont to be described as the Golden Age of Scholasticism, all the leaders of theology again displayed the principle of Authority on their banners.

Such was the conflict between reason and authority, as it arose even in the Middle Ages, and has always been renewed till now. In principle it is interminable. As to the matter of *principle*, it is not settled even in the happiest case where reason accepts and defends the content of authoritative doctrine. For reason does so and can do so only because it recognises that content as rational, and dares to prove it to be rational. Authority, on the other hand, requires recognition and acceptance *because* it is authority, quite independently of any judgment of reason. But just as in the above-mentioned case there is still a reconciliation *as a matter of fact*, it is clear that such reconciliation can never be permanently dispensed with. The scientific interest and the religious and ecclesiastical interest are of course by no means mutually exclusive. The mind that shares both must seek some mediation between them. And the very same thing is repeated on a large scale. There must be mediation, since the Church cannot without surrendering her cause withdraw from the position that the truth preached by her should rule the mental life of Christendom. That necessity does not preclude special and temporary conflicts with the reason of an age or with science as the case may be. But it imposes on her the obligation of seeking a

cuditur populis et gentibus evangelium, nova proponitur fides, fundamentum aliud ponitur præter id quod positum est."

peaceful adjustment. And now the question is, What was the nature of that reconciliation between reason and authority which existed *as a matter of fact* in the period here treated?

The answer follows from our general discussion up to this point. The reconciliation consisted in the fact that the two conceptions the relation of which is considered, with all their oppositeness in point of principle, were still *essentially kindred* conceptions. What was understood by authority was the body of dogma which theology in the early Church had established by means of the Idealistic philosophy of antiquity, consisting of conclusions which, *regarded in their scientific form*, must be viewed as a creation of that philosophy. But the reason that was boasted of, and the growth of which formed the occasion of the protest against the principle of authority, or which felt itself equal to the task of proving the truth of dogma on adequate grounds,—this reason was determined on its side by the philosophical traditions of antiquity. We must recollect the fact that reason is something historically conditioned, and consider under what conditions the reason of the thinkers in the Middle Ages was placed. Then it follows immediately, as was stated above, that authority and reason were essentially kindred with each other. The opposition is formal, *in the matter of principle:* as such it is irreconcilable. If we look to the *content*, on the other hand, there is a prevailing conformity, and points of contact are presented throughout: in so far a reconciliation is always possible as a matter of fact.

To some extent it is one and the same thing that

gave the conflict its peculiar form at that time, owing to which it precluded an adjustment of the matter of principle, and that now contained in itself again the possibility of an adjustment nevertheless, viz. the compact between religion and science as it was struck on the occasion of the rise of dogma in the early Church. For to it was due, on the one hand, the circumstance that authority was presented as a body of cut and dry scientific propositions, whereas reason seemed a free creative power of the human mind, one that tolerates no fetters. And, on the other hand, it is just that compact that secures for dogma the necessary connection with the mental life of Christendom—so long as the same reason that worked on dogma maintains its supremacy.

In fact it is on this basis that the mental position of a man like Scotus Erigena first of all becomes intelligible. The Neo-Platonic tradition brought down by "Dionysius the Areopagite" and Maximus the Confessor gave the principal impulse to his own philosophical work.[1] That tradition was, however, even in his proximate source, of a Christian complexion; and starting from that point he also found throughout points of connection with the Fathers (especially Gregory of Nyssa), who had philosophised in the same sense, and whose writings were also ranged on the side of authority. Indeed, his principal sponsor, that same Dionysius, as he was called, passed for a disciple of the apostles, and seemed to a philosophy which attached itself to him to guarantee a direct connection with Christ and His apostles. Thus

[1] Prantl, *Geschichte der Logik im Abendland*, ii. p. 33.

Erigena could explain authority in respect to its content as the veiled truth of reason. Thus he could be sincerely of opinion that in his discussions he hit the true meaning of dogma, being as he was the first in the line of those who turn the elements of ancient philosophy contained in dogma against the Christian religion, and, while destroying the latter, think they are disclosing its true meaning. In declaring true religion and true philosophy to be identical,[1] he gave theological speculation its oft-repeated catch-word. But that that *true* religion, which is described more particularly as reverence for the first Cause, is the *Christian* religion, who would care to assert?

On this basis, too, the scientific principles of an Anselm are made intelligible. His position is similar to that which the fathers of dogma themselves adopted. He knows of a natural capacity in man for the knowledge of God, in which his likeness to God consists, and knows in reference to it that it was lost by sin but is restored through Christ. Or, in other words, the Logos speculation is the soul of such of his thought as is *scientific*. If he does not succeed in carrying out the principle *Credo ut intelligam* in a consistent sense, it is the contradiction previously treated of (p. 108), and now embodied in dogma, that prevents him. I mean the contradiction that in consistency the philosophical standpoint requires knowledge as such to be declared the substance of the spirit, whereas the Christian faith binds the pious soul to the historical revelation of God, and makes the highest knowledge dependent on moral conditions. Those disquisitions

[1] *De prædestinatione*, cap. i. 1 (*Opera*, pp. 357 D, 358 A).

of Anselm run in the former groove, in which he seems to understand by the faith which is preparatory man's rational capacity as such, and regards knowledge as essentially requisite for the completion of subjective Christianity. This other consideration determines the acceptation where it is obedience to authority that is emphasised in faith, and faith is described as sufficient without subsequent knowledge. In this way it becomes apparent that the two lines of thought combined in dogma do not in truth coincide with each other. This does not disprove the assertion that for Anselm an actual reconciliation of authority and reason was furnished after all by the intrinsic affinity between these two in his conception of them, by the fact that both were determined by the same theological and philosophical tradition.

The later development of mediæval theology must no less be understood from this same basis. And this applies particularly to the doctrine held by Thomas Aquinas, a doctrine which is of special importance for us, because the main features of it are reproduced in the orthodox Dogmatics of the Evangelical Church, and so have continued to be of great significance for theology down to the present. We shall therefore have to occupy ourselves with that doctrine here at somewhat greater length. But before we can do so, it is necessary to cast a rapid glance at least at the development of philosophy in the Middle Ages. By this means in the first instance what has just been said will be worked out and confirmed, while at the same time there will be a sure position obtained for the interpretation of the doctrine maintained by Aquinas.

Some have meant to deny all independence and consequently all intrinsic value to the philosophical development in the Middle Ages. It is held to have been determined simply by the gradual accretion of more extensive matter taken from ancient philosophy. So Prantl maintains in his *History of Logic*. This judgment certainly needs qualification. And that is supplied at once if we consider that the historical dependence of particular systems on the systems preceding them, the fact that they are conditioned by these, is much more marked over the whole field of philosophy than is frequently supposed, and especially more so than those immediately concerned from time to time are inclined to suppose. To this we must add the facts that it is always the same problems that press themselves anew, although in a modernised form, on the human mind; that in this particular sphere development is unusually slow; and that those turning-points in the history of human thought are rare which, even *when viewed from a distance*, still seem to be such, to be real turning-points and new beginnings. Whoever reflects on all this will not conceive the relation of mediæval to ancient philosophy as an exception to the rule, but will see in it only the comparatively distinct prominence of an element which exists and acts its part everywhere. And then too a link of connection is easily found by which to reconcile our recognition of the proper mental activity of the Middle Ages, of their theologians and philosophers, with a strict regard for the relation of dependence existing in the case.

But though Prantl's estimate of mediæval philosophy

may accordingly have to be considerably modified, still there is something sound in it so far as concerns the principal point, viz. the matter of fact. It is really the case that the philosophical development in the Middle Ages, so far as we can speak of such development, is determined above all by the circumstance that more of the matter of ancient philosophy comes to be known. It is especially the writings of Aristotle that fall to be considered here. There seems to me to be in turn an exaggerated estimate of the mental activity of that time, if anything else than this fact is made the basis of our interpretation of its *development*. Even the characteristic achievement of the time is derived from the new impulses supplied to it by the gradually extended knowledge of ancient philosophy.

At first only a portion of the Logical works of Aristotle was known, and that through the intervention of *Boethius*. At the beginning of the twelfth century there were added the remaining works of the *Organon*, both in the translation of Boethius and in another new translation.[1] At last, as the thirteenth century opened, the Arabs communicated to the West the knowledge of all the principal works of Aristotle.[2] Simultaneously the influence of the later Byzantine Logic asserted itself, which, however, itself again stands in the same relation of dependence to ancient philosophy occupied by the new growths on Latin soil.[3] To this external course of things corresponds the

[1] Prantl, *loc. cit.* ii. p. 4, and especially p. 98 ff.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 295 ff.
[3] *Ibid.* i. p. 643 ff., ii. p. 261 ff., iii. p. 10 ff.

internal development. Two things, which again doubtless are very closely connected with each other, fall to be considered here: first the growing influence of Aristotle in general; and secondly, the gradually increased prominence of those elements of the Aristotelian philosophy which are peculiar to it, and distinguish it particularly from the Platonic system, which is otherwise akin to it. In the early Church it was Platonism that had possessed supremacy; whereas on the part of the Fathers, who rejected philosophy, or at least wanted to restrict its influence, Aristotle in particular was regarded as the representative of pernicious sophistry.[1] In opposition to this view, the reputation of Aristotle increased more and more in the Middle Ages, till at last he held the field and attained undisputed sovereignty in Scholastic philosophy. Then in connection with this comes the further circumstance that at first Platonism was firmly enough rooted to decide—at least in the view of most people—even as to the conception that was formed of Aristotle. Only by slow degrees did the special characteristics of Aristotelian thought prevail as against this practice, and then it assumed an attitude of direct opposition to the Platonic system.

Both facts are reflected from the nature of the case mainly in the dispute on Realism and Nominalism, *i.e.* in the disquisitions on that question which was very specially the basal problem of philosophy in the Middle Ages, and which, although in a modernised form, is continually proposed anew for discussion,

[1] In the passages adduced by Prantl, *loc. cit.* ii. p. 5 f., notes 8-16 Aristotle is mentioned almost throughout.

because it is inseparable from the problem of the Theory of Knowledge. The controversy on that question had begun even at an early period, and the various conceptions of later times had likewise early existed in germ, although at first they were announced without being strictly speaking matter for dispute and for thorough-going partisanship.[1] Then came a time when Realism preponderated, or could claim absolute sovereignty. Afterwards that theory was modified by the influence which the Aristotelian philosophy began to exercise, and that in the sense of a relaxation and an approximation to Nominalism. At last the latter system attained to general and hardly disputed sovereignty. But this issue too may be referred to the same influence of Aristotelian philosophy, to a development which lies in the direction of the influence exercised by it. For while Aristotle as a thinker was certainly by no means a Nominalist, yet his philosophy contains an element—and in this it is particularly distinguished from the Platonic system — which, consistently maintained, might lead to that type of thought. This is his leaning towards the concrete and the exact knowledge of it.

While now it is true as a general principle that theology cannot assume an attitude of indifference towards the philosophical movements of the time, there was formed in the Middle Ages, above all, so close a connection between the two interests, that theology was at once sympathetically affected by this development. It was on the development in question

[1] Prantl, ii. p. 35 ff.

that it depended what was more precisely understood at a given time by "reason." And at once it is clear what effect there must have been on theological activity as a whole, and especially on the conception of authority and reason, if an avowedly Realistic or a Nominalistic type of thought was taken to be the type which was strictly rational. This is found to be the case more particularly when we consider how the theologians who chiefly represented the standpoint of authority were twice disconcerted by the rising influence of Aristotle. And if the first time men succeeded in subjecting what was new to the service of the ruling conception, the movement ended the other time with the victory of the new over the old.

For the first time a crisis occurred in the eleventh century, when the new dialectical art began to spread and the value of it to take hold of men's minds. In point of fact this art was an exercise of reason of a different nature from that which already existed in the Platonism of dogma and tradition. Anselm, however, on the ground of his Realism and Augustinian Platonism, overcame all the misgivings roused against Dialectics, and just because of this attitude of his thought cherished such strong confidence that rational research would and must lead to the same results as the faith that rests on authority. Indeed, he exercised on philosophy itself a lasting influence in the direction of Realism. He could even presume to characterise Roscellinus and those of the same mind as *heretics in Dialectics* on account of their Nominalistic standpoint.[1] At the same time the formal character of the

[1] *De fide Trinitatis*, c. 2 (*Opera*, i. p. 265 A).

dialectical art was of value in making it possible to enlist that art wholly in the service of Realism. And thus the latter was by no means crushed in the first instance. Even Abelard, though he cannot pass for a Realist, does not deny Platonism.[1]

Once more a sort of crisis arose at the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the principal collection of Aristotle's writings, especially his *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, became known. There is something like a brief surging of the different currents as they meet, till the issue this time also pronounces for the adoption of the new element and not for opposition to it. True, it seemed at first doubtful. The reading of Aristotle's writings, viz. the *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, was forbidden in the year 1210, at a Synod in Paris, and in the year 1215 by a Papal legate.[2] Men like Amalric of Bena and David of Dinant had made use of them in a manner destructive of dogma. Ostensibly at least the influence of Aristotle was chargeable with their doctrine. In truth this effect was produced by the writings of his Arabian commentators. But those writings went under the name of Aristotelian Natural Philosophy.[3] The prohibition mentioned did not hold good, but, at least as a matter of fact, was soon enough annulled; and the rank of Aristotle as the *Philosophus*, as the proper incarnation of all philosophy, always gained more recognition. Of course the so-called Averroists, as philosophers in the stricter sense, do not fall to be considered when we

[1] Prantl, *loc. cit.* ii. pp. 162, 166 f.
[2] Gieseler, *Church History*, 3rd ed., ii. 2, p. 411.
[3] Gieseler, *loc. cit.*, note *h*.

treat of the further development of theology. But even in theology proper the new acquisition was soon enough appropriated.

From that appropriation there resulted nothing less than the blossoming time of Scholasticism, which is identified especially with the names of Albert the Great and his pupil Thomas Aquinas. However, we do not yet find in them an appropriation of the Aristotelian type of thought as it actually stands. The conception and realisation of it rather took shape now as before in the sense of Neo-Platonism. In this form it was handed down among the Christian theologians. No less did the Arabs who opened up the newly-discovered writings teach men so to understand them.[1] And on them again the Schoolmen who have been mentioned were dependent in this matter. All the more, so far as they were concerned, did matters still rest in Realism; only it was now modified in an Aristotelian sense.[2] And although they cite the works of Aristotle as the highest philosophical authority, Platonism, or more correctly Neo-Platonism, is unmistakeable in numerous statements of theirs and in many of their most important doctrines.

But still, what a difference between the principles of Anselm and those of Aquinas! The former still ventures to prove the whole of dogma to be true on speculative lines and as it were *à priori*. Aquinas, on the other hand, distinguishes positively between such dogmas as admit of a rational proof and such as do not. What is at the root of this difference between

[1] Prantl, *loc. cit.* ii. pp. 298 f., 305, 350.
[2] *Ibid.* iii. pp. 94 ff., 109 ff.

the two theologians is the different conception they have of reason. And the conception of Aquinas is determined by the authority which Aristotle had meanwhile gained in the world of mediæval thought. It is quite simply put thus: those dogmas are rational which can be understood and explained by means of the Aristotelian philosophy; those, on the other hand, of which that cannot be said are *supra rationem*. Thus Aquinas rejects, *e.g.*, the ontological proof for the existence of God which had been framed by Anselm, and justifies himself simply by saying that the *Philosophus* does not have it. But the doctrine of Aquinas must be more closely considered immediately. We first give another glance at the close of the philosophical and theological development in the Middle Ages.

Duns Scotus forms a connecting link between the above-mentioned theologians and the later Nominalists. As regards the question of the Schoolmen about *universalia*, he expresses his doctrine in the same formulæ (derived from the Arabs) as Albert and Aquinas had used. But by the pre-eminently critical cast of his thought he undoubtedly helped to usher in the reign of Nominalism. Especially did he facilitate the attitude of the later Nominalists towards theology and their position in it. He already announced the principle of twofold truth. And to him it is doubtful whether theology is a science in the proper sense. At all events, it is held to rest on principles of its own, applicable only to it, and to have a practical rather than a speculative character. Then among Thomists and Scotists Nominalism attained

supremacy, though in a new form. With it there was connected in theology an external supernaturalism, which declared ecclesiastical dogma to be the object of a *meritorious* belief, but refrained from giving any rational proof of it.

This last period of Scholasticism has the reputation of marking the downfall of it. As regards theology, that is certainly correct. Such principles as that of twofold truth signify nothing but the bankruptcy of scientific theology. Doubtless the other idea that correct belief is a meritorious service, is far from new. Even Gregory the Great occasionally expressed it.[1] Nor does Aquinas deny it.[2] And it deserves to be brought prominently to view that that idea is very closely connected with the whole method of formulating doctrine which is presented in ecclesiastical dogma. As Christianity is really, like every religion, primarily a practical matter, that fact among others is brought out even in the erroneous manner stated, so long as the ecclesiastical method of formulating the Christian faith is not shaped chiefly in accordance with that truth. Even we Protestants are still far from being free from the conditions under which the idea in question always comes up again. But though it is thus deeply rooted in the Catholic system of dogma, it was reserved for the time we are considering to resort to it in the defence of the faith. And by that circumstance too the downfall of Scholasticism is made manifest.

[1] A remark to which Abelard returns (with a polemical purpose) on every opportunity. Cf. *e.g. Introd. ad theologiam*, ii. (*Opera*, ii. p. 77), *Dialogus* (*Opera*, ii. p. 671).

[2] *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 8; ii. 2, qu. 2, arts. 9 *et* 10.

On the other hand, doubtless, we should by no means entirely reject the new and characteristic ideas that arose in this last period. The doctrine of Duns Scotus on the primacy of the Will contains a great truth, to which later philosophers, and among them the most notable, returned; and indeed the correct apprehension and prosecution of it seems to me to be one of the most important problems of the future. Something similar may be asserted of the connected thesis on the practical character of theology. And as for Nominalism, it is not merely not opposed to the scientific interest, but it harmonises in the best manner with it. Even in those times it arose in connection with that side of the Aristotelian philosophy which turns towards science.

And yet that last period of Scholasticism is a time of downfall. In it the conditions were wanting under which alone the above-mentioned merits can appear as such and become operative. Those conditions are on the one hand a rich development of the empirical sciences, a development founded on experience and the investigation of the concrete, and on the other hand an insight into the true nature of faith and of its character as conditioned by practice. For the aim at a knowledge of the concrete proves to be of value only where it is really followed up by comprehensive empirical research. And only where it is acknowledged that faith itself is subject to peculiar rules of knowledge, by which the particular articles of faith are determined, does the accentuation of the Will in matters of faith not lead to blind submission to articles that are not understood. But of all that there was no mention in those times. Instead of that, the compact

between religion and science which was established in the early Church formed the standing-ground then as before. And on that ground there occurs simply a collapse, if faith in the creative power of the theoretical reason, in its ability to cope somehow even with the loftiest problems, comes to an end.

Therefore, too, it is quite conceivable how the later development of theology attached itself, not to this period but to the fundamental ideas of Aquinas. These we now mean to examine somewhat more closely. They are as it were that result of mediæval Catholic theology which falls to be considered by us.

The new element in that doctrine which has its most notable representative in Thomas Aquinas is, as already stated, the distinction between such dogmas as admit of a rational proof and such as have to be accepted on authority. Petrus Lombardus, whose *Sentences* were commented on by Aquinas himself, and Alexander of Hales, who first drew the new philosophical material into the service of theology, know nothing of it as yet. Both seem rather to have purposely kept clear of general discussions on authority and reason,[1] and at all events as regards the question of principle cannot be viewed as forerunners of Aquinas. Perhaps, however, that may be asserted of the earlier *Hugo of St. Victor*, whom Aquinas himself is said to have regarded as his teacher.[2] For, apart from other points of connection, this Hugo makes a distinction in the content of faith

[1] Cf. Landerer, in Herzog, *R.E.*, 1st ed., vii. p. 472; Erdmann, *History of Philosophy*, 3rd German ed., i. p. 325 ff.

[2] Liebner, *Hugo von St. Victor*, p. 78.

between what is *ex ratione* and what is *supra rationem.*[1] And he is the first too who does so. For although the question of the application of rational demonstration had somewhat frequently been raised with reference to specifically Christian doctrines like that of the Trinity, and had been negatived in that connection particularly, yet I have not found any other before Hugo expressing such a dichotomy as a principle. Thus the idea is suggested that Albert the Great,[2] and after him Aquinas, if they accept and carry out this principle, have leant in so doing on the doctrine of Hugo.

We have therefore, according to the doctrine of Aquinas, to distinguish in what we know of God, between the truth attainable by natural means and that attainable only by divine illumination. The existence and unity of God, *e.g.*, the philosophers too have recognised and proved by the natural reason. But other matters, like the doctrine of the Trinity in the Godhead, surpass the power of comprehension possessed by human reason.[3] And in particular, as a doctrinal article of this sort, there must be mentioned along with the doctrine of the Trinity especially that of the Incarnation, and besides these the doctrines of creation in time and of the sacraments, and Eschatology. All the rest is comprehensible even by natural reason.

Natural theology arises now principally by our concluding from the works to the Creator. For in the *Summa contra gentiles*, Aquinas rejects Anselm's ontological argument, and connects his own discussion

[1] Liebner, *Hugo von St. Victor*, p. 185.
[2] *Opera* (Lugduni 1651) xvii. pp. 6, 32.
[3] *Summa contra gentiles*, i. c. 3. *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 1.

of the rational theological truths entirely with the cosmological argument, which he presents in a form borrowed from Aristotle.[1] It is the observation of the works of God that serves for the furtherance of faith and the overthrow of errors.[2] In the *Summa theologica* no less it is described as the natural method of knowing God to conclude from the effects to the cause.[3] Here, therefore, there is real argumentation; and the grounds of proof which come into application are conclusive for every one, even for him who recognises no authorities whatever.[4] On the other hand, in the doctrines which are hidden from reason and are known only through divine revelation, we have to depend primarily on grounds of authority. But that is in no way a lower standpoint than that which science adopts in other spheres. For, in the first place, it is the general rule that the principles which lie at the basis of proof are not themselves demonstrable; and here those principles are just the articles of faith. But then it must also be considered that it is divine and not some sort of human authority that is concerned.[5] Indeed, theology, it is plainly said, can be regarded as the principal science of all, just for the very reason that it rests on the foundation of divine authority, and so of irrefutable certainty.[6]

But now these two parts or halves of theology by no means stand alongside of one another as strictly divided fields, each governed by its own principle and having nothing to do with that of the other. For both

[1] i. c. 10 seq.
[2] *Summa c. g.* ii. c. 2, 3.
[3] i. qu. 12, art. 12.
[4] *Summa c. g.* i. c. 2.
[5] *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 7.
[6] *Ibid.* qu. 1, art. 5.

principles, reason and authority, rather extend to the whole of theology, so that in this way the unity, the homogeneousness, of the two halves is already secured. And in particular those conclusions at which reason can arrive by its own power are at the same time brought home to every one as the truth of faith, these belonging as a matter of fact to the content of divine revelation. It must be so, since only few, and these only after a long time and without being secured against error, would reach that knowledge, if all men here were referred to their own reason and to it alone.[1] On the other hand, reason has a problem to solve even with reference to those doctrines which it cannot prove. For it can nevertheless prove the arguments which are brought forward against them to be futile; and so too it can search out comparisons and connecting links for them in the field which is accessible to it.[2] Only proof is precluded. And because it cannot supply that, it ought not and must not attempt to do so in any way, so that the Christian faith may not appear to be supported by insufficient grounds of reason instead of the rock of divine truth.[3]

Thus in both divisions of theology the truth of faith is treated, and so too reason has its part to perform in the one case as well as in the other. Both principles cover the whole field; the difference consists only in the fact that the one or the other preponderates. Yet there is more than this: there is a connection further indicated between the two principles, a bridge thrown

[1] *Summa c. g.* i. c. 4. *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 1.
[2] *Summa c. g.* i. c. 8. *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 8.
[3] *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 32, art. 1; qu. 46, art. 2.

as it were from reason to authority. And that is done, moreover, in two ways. In the first place it is said that it is by no means unwise to believe the doctrines of divine revelation which transcend reason, inasmuch as the authority of revelation is guaranteed in the best possible way, viz. by miracles and prophecies as well as by the power of the Spirit proved in so many souls.[1] On the other hand, the idea recurs with various modifications, that it belongs to the nature of God as knowable by reason to rise above man's power of conception,[2] but that man on his part is referred to revealed truth, since his last and highest aim likewise lies beyond natural reason and the sphere of life accessible to it.[3] The one circumstance as well as the other serves to prove it *rational to refrain* as concerns positive doctrines from a *proof by the reason.* And then, to crown all, notwithstanding the dichotomy in the content that was mentioned, there is in this way a real unity attained and proved for theology as a science.

I maintained above (p. 156) that a theoretical reconciliation between the two principles of reason and authority is not possible. But it cannot be denied that Aquinas effects such a reconciliation at least approximately. There is belief on authority, and proof by the reason is by no means awaited prior to assent. No scholar can infer from his principles a dependence of faith on subsequent proof by the reason, a possibility which is not excluded, *e.g.*, by the procedure of Anselm.

[1] *Summa c. g.* i. c. 6.
[2] *Summa c. g.* i. c. 3, c. 5. *Summa totius theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 1.
[3] *Summa c. g.* i. c. 5.

But it is as little the case that the faith grounded on authority is imposed on man as an incommensurable quantity when his reason is the standard: that very faith on authority is proved as such to be rational. Thus both sides are really taken into account. There are doctrines with which reason can be satisfied by independent proof and argument, whereas in the case of others the holy awe of mystery predominates. And yet the two sets do not stand widely apart from each other, but mutually call for and condition each other in the manner just described.

A real reconciliation in principle is doubtless impossible on the ground of mediæval theology. In truth, that reconciliation rests here, as elsewhere, on the historical conditions under which it was brought about. In general they are those previously set forth. We now take a closer view of them in the particular form they assumed.

And now it may be accepted as a fact at this point, that Aquinas stood under the joint influence of the Aristotelian and the Neo-Platonic philosophy, the latter being accessible to him especially through the writings of the so-called Dionysius the Areopagite.[1] The authority of Aristotle, which was the leading standard, had the effect that the compass of rational, demonstrable truth was restricted to such conclusions as "the philosopher" himself had actually or presumably taught and proved. To this class belongs particularly the doctrine of the existence and nature of the one God as the supreme Cause of the world. Then the other influence mentioned led to the result

[1] Landerer, in Herzog, *R.E.*, 1 Aufl., p. 680 ff.

that in that notion of God which is accessible even to the natural reason, absolute transcendence was taken to be the principal characteristic—a view, moreover, which is in thorough harmony with the Aristotelian notion of God as well. And from the one side as well as the other a path is opened up for the establishment of the principle of authority. For if God is the supreme Cause of the world, then the authority which is guaranteed by miracles, prophecies, etc., is the true authority—an argument which we meet with even in the early Church, which is everywhere used in the Middle Ages, and is strongly pressed especially by the representatives of the standpoint of pure authority. On the other hand, if the nature of God is absolutely transcendent and inconceivable by human reason, it must be antecedently expected that His special revelation in the world will show traces of that. The fact that such is really the case serves for the confirmation of its divine origin instead of making the truth as to that origin doubtful.

Still more significant than this latter theological chain of ideas, is the anthropological chain which corresponds to it. It is already indicated in the *Summa contra gentiles*, in the Introduction of the first Book, which is occupied with the questions of principle. It is said there in the fifth chapter, that man is destined for a higher good than what his frailty allows him to know by experience in this life. But what he ought to strive after must be known to him. Thence follows the necessity of a supernatural communication of truth. And that that is not a merely incidental reference brought in together with

other matter from zeal to furnish proof by means of the Scholastic understanding, is shown by the exhaustive discussions of the third Book. Accordingly this chain of thought must be described absolutely as the primary connecting thought of the *Summa contra gentiles*, or say of the doctrine adhered to by Aquinas, and so of his theological system.

More exactly stated, it runs thus. God is the final purpose of all things. Things therefore attain their final purpose in proportion as they become like Him. This applies also to men, only with them the end comes about not by a mere *process* of attaining resemblance, but through their own *activity*, viz. through knowledge. The knowledge of God is accordingly the *finis ultimus* of all men.[1] Now he is happy who attains his end. If the knowledge of God is our chief end, then our chief good also consists in it; and whatever else is mistakenly so regarded is not that in truth; not even moral acts or virtues can be taken for it, but only the knowledge of God.[2] The question, however, is, to what sort of knowledge of God that applies. The obscure knowledge of the ordinary person does not stand so high, nor that which is attained by way of demonstration, nor even the knowledge of faith.[3] The last and proper aim of man is the *visio Dei* in the eternal life. Therein then consists also his chief happiness, which, once attained, endures for ever, and stills all the craving of the human heart.[4] But in order to arrive at that goal there is need of supernatural help, which must be at

[1] *Summa c. g.* iii. c. 25.
[2] *Ibid.* iii. c. 26–37.
[3] *Ibid.* iii. c. 38–40.
[4] *Ibid.* iii. c. 55–63.

once illumination and transference into new conditions of life.[1]

Now, in all this there is no further regard paid in the first instance to the knowledge of God as it is rendered possible in this life by revelation. It is rather expressly said that the happiness of man does not consist even in the knowledge of faith. But the supplementary statement which is implied in the above-mentioned words of the Introduction naturally presents itself, viz. that such knowledge is necessary as paving the way and preparing for the future *visio*. And in the exhaustive discussion too this is added in a later connection.

Thus it is said even in treating of the law, where the injunction of love to God is spoken of, that beholding is strictly speaking the presupposition of such love, but that privilege could be attained by us here only through faith, especially so far as concerns the things that transcend our natural reason.[2] And the chain of thought in the statements on grace leads to the same conclusion which is here demanded. The Providence of God, it is there said, is adapted to the peculiarities of the various creatures. The specialty of men consists in their capacity for knowledge; therefore Providence, so far as regards them, takes the form of an aid enabling them by this path (of knowledge) to reach their end, which is everlasting blessedness. That is also necessary owing to the numerous hindrances which they have to overcome, among which hindrances the weakness of the reason has to be named as holding the first place. This divine aid imparted

[1] *Summa c. g.* iii. c. 52–54. [2] *Ibid.* iii. c. 118.

to them out of love is the grace of God, which leads them to the path of blessedness by communicating to them mainly the supernatural knowledge necessary for such blessedness. In order that we may turn voluntarily—and otherwise from what was previously said we cannot turn—to our chief end, there must first of all be knowledge awakened in us. And this knowledge so produced is that which surpasses the natural reason.[1] But if the effect of grace is by no means restricted to faith and the knowledge supplied by it, it is plain nevertheless what significance properly accrues to the latter in the whole scheme. For this faith or this knowledge consists chiefly in aiming at the terminal point of the whole line, the future vision, or the completion of one's knowledge of God.

Such is the line of thought pursued by Aquinas, which appears to be the really fundamental thought of his doctrine. But if we ask whence that line of thought is derived by him, the answer cannot be doubtful. It is drawn from the Ethics of Aristotle, in which the dianoetic virtues take the highest place, and contemplation is described as the chief purpose of man, as the sphere of his chief good. Even the proof which Aquinas adduces for the proposition that the chief purpose of man has to be sought in the Intellect (νοῦς) is purely Aristotelian.[2] Of like origin is the analysis showing that man's chief happiness cannot lie in moral actions, because these point to a purpose outside themselves.[3] Aquinas himself even occasionally calls the highest knowledge which con-

[1] *Summa c. g.* iii. c. 147–153.
[2] *Ibid.* iii. c. 25.
[3] *Ibid.* iii. c. 34.

stitutes the purpose of man the "first philosophy" or Metaphysic,[1] and quotes even in the Introduction the authority of Aristotle among others for the statement that through knowledge man has to aspire to the divine.[2] The whole basal plan is thus consciously borrowed from Aristotle. However, in the use which is made of it for proving the supernatural character of definite doctrines, the influence of the purely transcendental notion of God is again shown, in forming which the power of Neo-Platonism at the same time manifested itself.

So the matter stands if the doctrine of Aquinas is regarded simply as a historical phenomenon, and a comprehension of its historical origin is sought. The philosophical systems too which influenced him are themselves again conceived in that case as historically given. Whether they are *true*, and whether the basis which theology thus finds in principle can itself lay claim to *absolute truth*—as to this there is no further question. And it does not form part of the plan of the present inquiry to raise this question now, and in general to consider what might possibly tell in favour of the doctrine of Aquinas and what against. But we do fix our attention on the circumstance that that doctrine has positive connecting links in the general relations of man's mental life. And as we do so it will also be brought out in what way the whole development of theology is concentrated in this doctrine as in a focus. But above all it will become intelligible from that position how the main features of it have asserted themselves even where the general

[1] *Summa c. g.* iii. c. 25. [2] *Ibid.* i. c. 5.

conditions of mental life have come to be entirely different, and when no one any longer thinks himself bound, after the manner of Aquinas or the mediæval teachers in general, by the authority of the ancient philosophers.

With this end in view I recall the analysis in the preceding chapter, showing those two types of thought concerned with dogma which the Church took over as an inheritance from the philosophy of antiquity, in such wise that when modified in a Christian sense they passed over into the dogma of the Church. The one, which I described as the rationalistic moralising type, is nothing but a relatively purified expression of the habits of thought and views of life of the rational man in the common sense of the word. The other, a speculative mystical species of wisdom, demands deeper reflection and is not directly suited for every person, appearing at the very first as a subject for the theological schools, and only gradually gaining effective significance for Church and dogma. But of it also it is true that in many ways it responds to or meets general requirements of the human mind. Above all, there falls to be considered here the religious craving, which feels out beyond the world of common experience. Furthermore, there is the instinctive feeling that that other "rational" view of the world and of life is not able to solve the enigmas of existence. And not of least importance is a very general fact, the inclination to the occult, to mystery and ecstasy.

If now we compare the doctrine of Aquinas with this analysis, we find that what he proclaims as the rational truth of religion is nothing else than the part of dogma

which corresponds to the first-named type of thought. On the other hand, the truths he wants to have accepted on authority are the speculative articles, which correspond to the other movement. In saying this, I do not mean to assert that in the two cases the distinctions exactly coincide. And the line of demarcation between the two halves of dogma has not been maintained exactly as it was fixed by Aquinas. But that there is a general agreement in the two instances follows naturally and requires no further proof. The point, too, in which both parts are connected according to Aquinas is just what was formerly described, viz. the question of the chief good, of the true and eternal happiness of men. And from the fact that his doctrine combines both, it is the better calculated to satisfy the requirements of the mind in a thoroughgoing manner. Doubtless it comes about in this way that speculative reason is not recognised, the product of it is not included in the truth of reason properly so called. But on the one hand that is not at all meant as a degradation of it. On the other hand it is in no way contrary to the customs of human reason to pursue rationalistic argumentation up to a certain point, but then to break off and to transport oneself by a *Salto mortale* into the region of ecstasy. In proceeding thus, Aquinas again only meets a widespread tendency of the human mind. And he does so in such a way as to continue in accord both with ecclesiastical authority and with reason as he understands it. Thus if the doctrine propounded by him, and especially the halving of dogma which is so characteristic of it, must be understood, as is true,

from the development of mediæval philosophy, if it must first be historically explained by that, still it is by no means an accidental product of varying historical circumstances. As it rests rather on the preceding theological development, and in a peculiar manner sums it up, it is no less true that it has deep roots in men's general tendencies, in permanent circumstances of their mental life.

Still another consideration may have co-operated in forming the distinction between the rational and the superhuman doctrines, and cannot be overlooked. I mean the relation of the particular doctrines to the *historical* revelation of God. Everything in dogma that refers to this is foreign to the philosophy adopted in dogma; so that in this way, as was formerly shown, an inherent contradiction is posited in the latter which must be artificially solved (p. 108). And so it is not in keeping with the philosophical thought of Aquinas to assign a constitutive significance to historical occurrences in any sphere of mental life. And if it is now made a principle by him, as was not formerly the case, that a distinction has to be drawn between rational doctrines and such as pass beyond reason, the assumption is suggested that the working out of the principle was influenced in part by the consideration of the relation of the particular doctrines to history. Such is in fact the case. At least with regard to the doctrines described as superhuman, like the doctrine of the Trinity and Christology, the doctrine of the Sacraments and Eschatology, it is entirely true that they are founded on the historical revelation of God, or have the results of it as their subject-matter. That

the speculative dogmas are found precisely among those doctrines which contain the historical element is not striking, because the alliance with history was formed by means of the same Logos idea which lies again at the basis of ecclesiastical speculation.

That the doctrine of Aquinas, although relatively new, is nevertheless anticipated everywhere in the earlier theology, appears finally from the further circumstance that the proofs for the principle of authority which he adduces are met with even in the theology of the early Church, and pervade the whole of mediæval theology. Regarding the proof from miracles and prophecies, that was brought out in the foregoing exposition. But it also applies to the other chain of thought which I described above as the fundamental thought of his doctrine, only it is presented by him in a peculiar form. For previously it was not so much the limits of our finite existence that were pointed to, after the manner of Aquinas, as rather sin, in order to explain how the highest truth reaches beyond the power of conception of human reason. In this form, indeed, the argument is occasionally touched upon by Erigena[1] and Anselm.[2] Hugo of St. Victor[3] announces it in the most positive manner, and in Alexander of Hales[4] it is not wanting. But that the idea in both forms is essentially the same is clear as soon as we bring forward for comparison the Catholic Scholastic doctrine of man's first state and of sin. For, according to it, as sin became the natural inheritance of the

[1] Reuter, *Geschichte der religiösen Aufklärung im Mittelalter*, i. p. 54.
[2] *Proslogium*, c. i. (*Opera*, i. p. 226).
[3] Liebner, *Hugo von St. Victor*, p. 178 f.
[4] Landerer, in Herzog, *R.E.*, 1st ed., xiii. p. 679.

human race, it consists above all in the fact that man lost a supernatural advantage with which divine grace had furnished the first man.[1] That is, it consists in the fact that he was restricted to his own original finite nature as such. And therefore it comes essentially to the same thing whether sin or the finite limitation of man is represented as being at the foundation. For in this combination the incapacity of human reason in the highest sphere of knowledge itself falls under the title of sin. Consequently it may be asserted that even this line of thought followed by Aquinas rests on an earlier tradition.

But if the Thomist doctrine is thus founded on the preceding theological development, and if it has deeper roots in the general conditions of mental life, it is conceivable how it also produced an uncommon effect in the later history. For such is the case. As the main features of the doctrine recur in modified form in the orthodox Dogmatics of our evangelical Church, they dominate theology more or less to this day. And one might not be without warrant in affirming that the *Summa contra gentiles* of Thomas Aquinas stands at the centre of the history which official ecclesiastical Dogmatics has traversed in the world. Here we still distinctly recognise the separate threads by the weaving together of which the web of ecclesiastical Dogmatics was produced; whereas at a later time they no longer reveal their historical origin so plainly,

[1] Kleutgen (in the *Theologie der Vorzeit*, last vol., 1860, p. 299) likewise expressly combines Aquinas' doctrine of the supernatural end of man with "another doctrine of theology" which was meanwhile sanctioned by the Church, viz. the doctrine that even before the fall man required grace in order to adore God.

although they are the same then as before. Thus from this book one can obtain a clue to the whole course of the development and the factors concerned in it.

It remains for me to point out at the close that this doctrine consistently with its origin answers completely to the Catholic conception of Christianity. Of the specially characteristic ideas of it in particular, of that distinction which was drawn between natural truths accessible to reason and supernatural truths transcending reason, this is true in the most positive sense. Here we have simply nothing but the form in which Dualism or external Supernaturalism, which marks as little else does the essence of the Catholic religion, is expressed in the sphere of theoretical knowledge. A rationalistic theory of the world, as answering to the habits of thought of the average rational man, forms the basis to which the special truths of Christianity as preached by the Church are then added as a superstructure possessing a supernatural character—quite corresponding to the way in which in the practical sphere a Legal Moralism of like origin governs life, and on this basis the higher virtues of the Christian are raised by the agency of the supernatural powers of the Church. In the one case, as well as in the other, the *Catholic* conception of the chief good is determinative, a conception from which Aquinas himself also derives his conclusions.[1]

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 446 ff. (cf. note to p. 61 of this book).

CHAPTER III.

ORTHODOX DOGMATICS.

The authority of Scripture—The groundwork of Orthodox doctrine: a modified reproduction of Scholastic doctrine—The Mediæval Catholic basis of that doctrinal groundwork.

PROTESTANTISM is a restoration of original Christianity as determined by the standard of Divine Revelation. Now that restoration was effected on the ground of Western Latin Christianity as it received its crowning form in the Middle Ages. For that reason Protestantism is still implicated in many ways in the past of Catholicism, especially in Catholic dogma. The old Protestantism and its Dogmatics are not correctly understood, unless the two sides are kept in view from the commencement. The essence of this historical result consists simply in its being a union of them both; the one corresponding to its specific intentions, the other to the historical situation in which it arose. The groundwork of the doctrine appearing in orthodox Protestant Dogmatics itself supplies evidence of this. Or at least it must be understood in the light of the fact that such is the case with regard to Protestantism.

The great renovation in the groundwork of doctrine consists in the fact that Holy Scripture is declared to be the sole and specific authority in theology.

That law proceeds directly from the Reformation. It is true that the maxim that the religion of Revelation must be guided by the standard of Revelation, or that the faith which has to be accepted and confessed in that religion must have its object and therefore its authority in Revelation, belongs to Christianity in general, and appears as a matter of course in the Christian system. The Catholic Church also recognises it. With no less emphasis it makes Holy Scripture stand for a source of Revelation. The new element in the Reforming principle consists in marking off Holy Scripture from ecclesiastical tradition, and setting the former above the latter. It consists in the rule expressed by Luther in the Smalcald Articles, *ut verbum Dei condat articulos fidei et præterea nemo, ne angelus quidem*,[1] a rule which is opposed to the authority of the "Fathers." But Dogmatics means nothing else than this when it speaks of Scripture as the one and only authority in Theology. The Authority of Scripture therefore indicates the great renovation of its doctrinal groundwork as compared with that of the Mediæval Schoolmen.

Now to this procedure of Protestant Dogmatics, when it thus incorporates the ecclesiastical maxim of the Reformation in the doctrine asserted by theology, there is certainly nothing to object. It is rather self-evident that Dogmatics as the science of the faith of the Church can and dare have no other rule of knowledge than the Church has which it seeks to serve. But certainly from the nature of the case it would have been requisite that the theological principle had

[1] *Libri symbolici eccles. ev.* (rec. Hase, 1846), p. 308.

been shaped in such a manner as really to represent the ecclesiastical maxim. It would have been necessary for this purpose that it should have been maintained from the first, by the mode in which the *scientific* principle was conceived, that the question was one relating to the rule for the *Christian faith* and ecclesiastical doctrine, not one relating to a general scientific rule for knowledge, a fact which was not immediately apparent on the ground of theology as it was on the *ecclesiastical* ground. There is another matter that is still more important, and that goes much deeper. The ever-recurring emphasis laid on *Faith* corresponds to the ecclesiastical maxim of the sole authority of Holy Scripture as the Word of God: this correlation exhibited by the Word and Faith is asserted with unwearying repetition, *e.g.* in the Confessional writings of the Lutheran Church. And that is only a consequence of the altered conception of the prize of salvation: this prize is of such a kind that it is offered by means of the Word as one which is spiritual and moral, and that it requires to be accepted by faith. A Sacrament too operates in the same manner as the Word, *i.e.* in such wise that only faith receives the blessing procured by it. In all this the Evangelical Confession opposes the mediæval Catholic conception, according to which the Church by means of the Sacraments applies to the individual person the hyper-physical benefit of salvation, and the Word also operates after the manner of the Sacraments, in such wise, viz., that the Christian assents in trustful obedience to the preaching of the Church without a real personal acceptance by faith having

necessarily anything to do with the matter. *That is the connection in which the maxim of the Reformation as to the sole authority of Holy Scripture originally stands.* In it the question is not merely about a formal principle and a formal opposition to the mediæval Catholic Church. At bottom there lies the *material* opposition between the knowledge of Christianity newly gained at the Reformation and the traditional conception. And now, in my view, the state of the case would have required the ecclesiastical maxim to be transferred to theology in a manner corresponding to this significance which it possessed. Then there would have resulted a transformation of the whole study of theology. For in it too on this supposition the truth would now have had to be enforced, that in theology or Dogmatics we are concerned with a knowledge of the faith, with that knowledge which has its object and rule in the Word of God, *i.e.* in the Revelation of God authenticated in Holy Scripture. By this means the first-mentioned requirement of a restriction of the authority of Scripture to the sphere of faith would at once have been satisfied.

But nothing of the kind happened in reality. Melanchthon, it is true, in the *Loci* of 1521, made an attempt in the direction just indicated, but only to give it up again immediately himself and to return to the old paths. Many things caused the development to take this course. In the first place the fanatical movements of the Reformation period obliged the originators and representatives of the Reformation to seek as far as possible a connection with the existing

Church and its dogma. Besides, matters rested then as before with the philosophy of the Mediæval Schoolmen. But theology cannot emancipate itself for any considerable time from the influence of the general life of thought and science. In this case that fact proved a hindrance to the rise of a theology that was specifically evangelical even in its scientific form. The extraordinary progress in the development of religion which Christendom owes to the Reformation, was only tardily and gradually matched by thought and research in other fields within that domain. Finally, it is necessary in my opinion to recollect the great influence of Augustine on the Reformers and on the rising Evangelical theology. That influence is quite intelligible, since Augustine already expressed the fundamental Evangelical idea of the solely operating grace of God; wherefore too the tributary Evangelical current in the Mediæval Church was nourished by Augustinian traditions. Augustine, however, in the formal sense, is strictly a Catholic theologian, and even the idea alluded to he expressed in a form consistent with that fact (as the doctrine of eternal divine Predestination). His influence therefore contributed not a little to confine Evangelical theology within the moulds of traditional theological study. But be the case as it may with regard to the reasons which led to this result—the fact is that that was the result. Protestant Dogmatics continued in the paths of Scholasticism. Therefore too it failed to assert the principle of the authority of Scripture with all the consequences implied in it, confining itself rather to the incorporation of it in the system of the Scholastic doctrine.

Thus was formed its conclusion representing Holy Scripture as the sole and proper authority in theology.

And so the original unity of the two sides in Protestantism that were spoken of is shown even here, in the fact that the transition from the ecclesiastical maxim to the theological principle was accomplished as a matter of course and without attracting conscious attention. The ecclesiastical maxim, it is true, was established before the theological principle; it is expressed in the first instance in the form corresponding to the *ecclesiastical* situation; and the mode in which the men of the Reformation handle it sometimes mocks the restrictions which were set up at a later time. Yet, as the double character of Protestantism that was alluded to implies, the Scholastic mode of view really forms the background from the first in these proceedings. The maxim was further interpreted candidly and without any methodical reflection in the sense that Holy Scripture is the sum of theological knowledge as supernaturally communicated, and that this knowledge consequently must be derived from it and from no other source. If, therefore, the theological schools afterwards estimated that same sense as the proper meaning for them of the Reformation maxim, that could only be understood as a more precise definition of it to meet the requirements of the schools. The transition from the ecclesiastical maxim to the theological principle of the schools does not at all consist in the fact that the idea itself is changed, or that a new element is added to it. What merely happens is that the centre of gravity is gradually transferred from the primary ecclesiastical idea to that

conception of it which represents the Scholastic drift of theology. But thus far at all events we can speak of a transition which then took place. We purpose now to take a somewhat closer view of the particulars in this matter.

In the *Confessional writings of the Lutheran Church* it is solely the ecclesiastical principle as such that appears. The earlier ones employ it, but without expressly setting it up as a principle. Or at least the Confession of Augsburg mentions it only in the preface. And here, alongside of Holy Scripture, there still comes the unadulterated teaching of the Church, with which those adhering to the Confessions likewise declare themselves to be in agreement so far as concerns the main points of the faith.[1] The Smalcald Articles, as was formerly stated, make the tension with the hitherto existing ecclesiastical authority appear more positively. In them the Word of God is further described *in contrast with the Fathers* as the sole source of the articles of faith.[2] This is still more expressly done in the Form of Concord.[3] But here too, what we have is still the ecclesiastical principle, *not* yet the theological. Only in this Confession, which is at the same time a manual of instruction in theology, the transition from the ecclesiastical standard of faith to the source of supernatural theological knowledge is already plainly apparent.

The beginnings of *Lutheran Dogmatics* exhibit this same transition. In the preface to the first edition of his *Loci*, Melanchthon mentions Holy Scripture,

[1] *Libri symbolici eccles. ev.* (rec. Hase, 1846), pp. 6, 15.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 308. [3] *Ibid.* pp. 570, 632.

opposing it to the discussions of the Schoolmen. But it is entirely on the ground of the ecclesiastical principle that he still moves when he says :[1] *fallitur quisquis aliunde christianismi formam petit quam e scriptura canonica.* And also in the preface to the edition by the latest hand there is a positive refusal to cross this line, when divine revelation is there represented as the ground of the certainty of the articles of faith, whereas other conclusions, like those of Arithmetic, *e.g.*, are vouched for by the mind's own judgment.[2] In the *Loci theologici* of Chemnitz the maxim that the judgment of Holy Scripture is decisive is held to be self-evident; only practical directions are given as to the attitude to be assumed by the theologian in view of that fact.[3] In Hutter, too, who follows the example of the Form of Concord, what appears is rather the *judex controversiarum ecclesiæ* than the *principium cognoscendi* of theology.[4] But after Gerhard (following the precedent of Selnecker) had treated exhaustively of Holy Scripture as the authority in theology, that view became general in Lutheran Dogmatics. And with that the transition to the theological principle of the schools was at length complete.

In the *Reformed Church* the development proceeds in general on similar lines. However, there arises a twofold distinction. In the *first* place, the authority

[1] *Die Loci Communes Philipp Melanchthons in ihrer Urgestalt herausgegeben und erläutert* von G. L. Plitt, 1864, p. 99.

[2] *Loci præcipui theologici per Philippum Melanchthonem*, Berolini, 1856, p. 2.

[3] *Loci theologici Martini Chemnitii, editi opera et studio Polycarpi Leyseri*, Francofurti et Wittebergæ, 1653, i. p. 15.

[4] *Compendium loc. theologicorum*, Wittebergæ, 1622, p. 5.

of Scripture is here expressly stated from the first in the Confessional writings. To begin with, the conclusions of Zwingli, which formed the basis of the Zurich Disputation of 1523, place the authority of the Gospel above that of the Church in the first sentence.[1] In like manner, the first Confessional work of the Reformed Church of more general significance, the *Helvetica prior*, treats of the authority of Scripture in the first five articles.[2] And then, apart from the Catechisms, that becomes the rule in the Reformed Confessions which cover the whole field of Christian doctrine.[3] But in the *second* place the positive features of the theological principle of the schools appear earlier in the Reformed Church than in the Lutheran. This is already very evident in the Confessional writings themselves. The Gallican Confession of 1559 and the Belgic Confession of 1562 already show a tendency towards the groundwork of doctrine found in orthodox Dogmatics, distinguishing as they do between the natural and the supernatural revelation of God, and describing the latter which is contained in Holy Scripture as the only valid source of the true knowledge of God.[4] Accordingly the Belgic Confession in particular enters even into the doctrine of Inspiration,[5] not to mention the fact that the much later *Formula Consensus* gave ecclesiastical sanction to the extreme consequence of that doctrine.

[1] *Zwinglis Werke*, von Schuler und Schulthess, i. p. 175.

[2] *Collectio confessionum*, ed. Niemeyer, 1840, p. 105.

[3] Only the *Confessio Czengerina* forms an exception which, however, is characterized in the title as *ex verbo Dei sumpta*, and proves, *e.g.*, even the doctrine of the Trinity from the Old Testament.

[4] *Coll. conf.* pp. 329 seq., 360 seq.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 361.

The case is not otherwise with the beginnings of the *Reformed Dogmatics*. Zwingli begins his *Commentarius de vera et falsa religione* by treating of natural revelation and the natural knowledge of God, declares that this is not satisfying, and introduces his analysis of the true doctrine of God with the words,[1] *nos quid Deus sit ex ejus ore volumus discere*, *i.e.* of course from Holy Scripture.

The first edition of Calvin's *Institutio religionis christianæ*, of the year 1536, does not yet contain anything of that kind. On the other hand, with the second edition of 1539 there appears a discussion *De cognitione Dei* at the beginning of the book, which is preserved in the following editions, and in that of 1559 occupies chapters 2–9 of the first Book. Here the line of thought is now similar to what we find in Zwingli in the passage named. There is a natural revelation and knowledge of God which, however, does not suffice. God has therefore supplemented it for His people by the spoken and then the written Word. The Authority of Holy Scripture is therefore established by means of a briefly outlined doctrine of Revelation, which contains the elements of the later doctrine. On the other hand, the developed doctrine of Inspiration is still wanting. Putting all else aside, Calvin appeals simply to the effect of Holy Scripture on the hearts of the faithful. Finally, the independence of its authority as respects that of the Church is exhaustively discussed.[2] Thus the Dogmatics of the

[1] *Zwinglis Werke*, iv. pp. 155 ff., 158.

[2] *Corpus Reformatorum XXIX. Joannis Calvini Opera*, i. pp. 279-304; *Institutio rel. christ.* i. c. 2-9 (Genevæ, 1561, pp. 3–37).

Reformed Church corresponds to its Confessional writings. In it, too, the features of the theological principle appear from the first more distinctly than is the case in Lutheran Dogmatics.

But this difference does not matter here. The result is the same in both cases. The ecclesiastical maxim as to the sole supreme authority of Holy Scripture in matters of faith is developed into the theological principle that Holy Scripture is the source of the supernaturally revealed doctrines of theology, without the transition from the one to the other becoming a matter of conscious observation. That could not be, for the reason that the Scholastic tradition as to doctrine influenced the conception of the maxim from the first. And that again was due to the fact that the improvement of religion which sprang from the Reformation was accomplished on the ground of the Western Church of the Middle Ages.

The more special amplification of the orthodox doctrine as to Revelation and Scripture must also be understood in the light of this origin assigned to it. It does not represent the organic connection if we determine that doctrine from the order of subjects, if we make the doctrine of Scripture follow from that of twofold Revelation, etc. The doctrine was not derived from any such methodical reflection on the subjects themselves. Much less still was the authority of Holy Scripture afterwards derived from that doctrine. The course followed was rather the opposite. What was established to begin with was the conviction that Holy Scripture, brought into connection with the traditional Scholastic doctrine, has to occupy

the place of the principle of authority in theology. And the doctrine as to Revelation, Scripture, and Inspiration was constructed in order to justify that view. But as the same need had never previously existed in the same form, the doctrine thence resulting is also in consequence something relatively new,[1] although the elements of it had long since existed in theological tradition.

Then at a later time, doubtless, individuals such as Calov make an attempt to follow the order of subjects in the way that was spoken of. But what comes originally is the other form, that which plainly shows the genesis of the doctrine, as just mentioned. Gerhard treats of Holy Scripture, and because he does so he treats of a Revelation of God in it. The fact that there is also a natural Revelation he only brings up later, where he is dealing with the *notitia Dei naturalis*.[2] In like manner, the treatment of the *revelatio generalis* occasionally appears in the works of most of the others, whether at the same place as in Gerhard, or where they observe that *theologia revelata* has its name from the *revelatio specialis*.[3] And if Calov takes a different course, it signifies a purely external transposition of the elements without a corresponding internal modification of the doctrine. In the Reformed Dogmatics also things do not seem to have proceeded differently, notwithstanding the

[1] Gass, *Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik*, i. p. 236.

[2] *Loci communes theologici*, ed. Cotta, 1762–81, iii. p. 45.

[3] Musæus, *Introductio in theologiam*, Jenæ, 1678, p. 105; Baier, *Compendium theologiæ positivæ*, ed. Preuss, 1864, p. 4; Hollatius, *Examinis theologici acroamatici*, ed. 4, Holmiæ et Lipsiæ, 1750, pp. 6, 61; Quenstedt, *Theologia didactico-polemica*, Vittenb., 1685, p. 250.

impetus given by Zwingli and Calvin to a procedure guided by the order of subjects. At least in the works of Keckermann, Polanus, Wolleb, and Wendelin, I have not found it to be otherwise. Here too the whole doctrine is regarded from the same point of view, the object being to justify Scripture as the rule of knowledge in theology, *i.e.* as the infallible source of revealed truths.

Thus and thus only are explained, too, the particular conclusions, in part strange enough, formed regarding Revelation, Scripture, and Inspiration. For example, it can be understood from this standpoint how Revelation is immediately identified with the communication of truth by the Word, and how its historical character is but little emphasised.[1] It is simply the conception of Scripture as the infallible source of theological truths that stands out from the first as the end to be reached in the construction of the doctrine. In like manner, what the writers on Dogmatics teach as to the relation of Revelation and Scripture to one another, becomes intelligible from the same standpoint. God, it is said, has revealed Himself in many ways, but especially by the Word; the Word, first orally pronounced, was then by a decree of divine mercy put down in writing, or at least the most important parts of it.[2] Then from this it can be inferred what is the meaning of the fact that for the present life divine Revelation and Holy Scripture are simply iden-

[1] Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 234.

[2] *Chemnitii loci*, iii. *in thesibus De origine Jesuitarum*, p. 4; Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. pp. 26–28; Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 232; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 47.

tical.[1] But the position of matters comes to light most clearly in the conclusions regarding Revelation and Inspiration.

Thus, if we examine the doctrine as to Revelation and Scripture just mentioned, it is quite clear that there is not yet any guarantee offered by it for the infallibility of Scripture. For when the divine Revelations were put down in writing, who made the proper selection? and what memory was trustworthy enough to vouch for the infallible preservation of the divine words in the interval that elapsed? Consequently, *if the object is to be accomplished*, the editing of Holy Scripture must also be ascribed to God Himself. That is done by the doctrine of Inspiration. But if it seems from the whole situation that Inspiration must be restricted to those elements of Scripture of which the author could possess no natural knowledge without communication from God, that again is forbidden by *the purpose which has to be accomplished.* For if that were the case, it would again be left to human choice to distinguish between divine and human elements in Holy Scripture, and its infallible authority would be made questionable. Thus Inspiration is extended to the whole of Scripture, even to the part of its content which is already known by natural means. And if it is next considered that the whole discussion ought, strictly speaking, to be a description of divine *Revelation*, it is taught that only Revelation in the narrower sense signifies the proclamation of mysteries; in the wider sense every supernatural

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. pp. 8, 15, 18; Musæus, *Introductio*, pp. 232, 241; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 43; Quenstedt, *Theologia*, p. 32.

communication has to be understood by it, even the communication of such knowledge as man already possesses by nature.[1]

Nothing, we may affirm, serves so well as this strange extension of the notion of Revelation to prove that it is wrong to seek in orthodox Dogmatics a doctrine as to Revelation, Inspiration, and Holy Scripture which proceeds in the order of the subjects. There is no such doctrine there. It is only the aim at proving the divine origin of Holy Scripture, and thereby its strict infallibility as the rule of knowledge in theology, that explains the turns which the doctrine takes. Revelation and Inspiration are similar notions occupying the same place; so that we may seriously ask if the doctrine of Inspiration does not render all that is said about Revelation superfluous. The two doctrines are not thought of and not drawn up in relation to one another, and each as the complement of the other. They are only fitted to each other as an after-thought, and in an external manner.

Such is the principle of the authority of Scripture according to orthodox Dogmatics, representing the most conspicuous renovation which that subject has to show in the sphere of its doctrinal groundwork. That renovation is unmistakably derived from the Reformation. But the mode in which it is carried out makes it as plain that the new principle is maintained in a given theological connection. That connection is the Scholastic doctrine, the domination of which thus extended to Protestant Dogmatics. It was not con-

[1] Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 155; Calovius, *Systema loc. theol. Wittebergæ*, 1655, i. p. 279; Hollatius, *Examen*, pp. 62, 87.

sciously or of set purpose that the Protestant writers on Dogmatics adhered to the Scholastic prototypes; that was rather done in their case simply as a matter of course, as there was no other science whatever known to them. But if we ask which of the Scholastic prototypes they approach most closely, the reply has to be that it is the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas. This resemblance, however, hardly rests on a direct and conscious appropriation of the Thomistic conclusions, but was occasioned by the fact that Melanchthon, as an Aristotelian, took up a similar position to that of Aquinas, while Melanchthon again determined the view of the later theologians.[1] Be this as it may, however, the resemblance at all events is a fact, and recurs in every essential feature. And thus we shall best accomplish our purpose in what follows, by comparing the Protestant doctrine simply with that of Aquinas.

To begin with, the outlines of theological knowledge are the same here as before. There is a *theologia naturalis* which is comprehensible even by the natural reason, and can be proved by the means at its command. In it there appears a *lumen naturale in rebus divinis*. In that light we recognise the unity and the

[1] Cf. Troeltsch, *Vernunft und Offenbarung bei Johann Gerhard u. Melanchthon*, Göttingen, 1891. Troeltsch will not hear at all of the connection of the Protestant doctrine with that of Aquinas, but accentuates only the difference between them; and in so doing appeals to the view of the writers on Dogmatics themselves. But here it is not observed that the common matter, which after all predominates, is not noticed at any length by the writers in question, because it is taken for granted; whereas for our historical study it remains the more important element.

existence of God, as also His metaphysical perfection.[1] True, it must not be understood that the idea of God is innate in the human mind. When that doctrine of Descartes arose, it was rather combated by the representatives of orthodox Dogmatics; and the natural light was restricted to a natural craving for God, combined with an innate perfection of the Intellect, by virtue of which we perceive the truth of the common statements about God.[2] But however individual writers specially represent the matter, what is common to all is the doctrine that there is such a Natural Theology as the vestibule of Revealed. And just as common is the other doctrine, that this Natural Theology does not suffice, that it urgently requires to be supplemented by Revelation, and that it is only the doctrine founded on the latter, *theologia revelata*, that forms Christian theology in the true sense of the word.

But here too the two parts do not stand in an external relation, *side by side* with one another, each of them governed by a principle of its own. It is rather taught that in a certain sense the two principles really cover the whole field. Thus, in the first place, the truths of Natural Theology are still more completely contained in divine Revelation. Indeed, the Christian theologian accepts them, strictly speaking, only because he recognises them as true on testing them by his own principle, *i.e.* by Holy Scripture.[3]

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, iii. p. 46, seq.; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 16; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 188.

[2] Musæus, *Introductio*, pp. 56 seq., 80.

[3] Chemnitz, *Loci*, i. p. 21; Gerhard, *Loci*, i. p. 77, ii. p. 9; Musæus, *Introductio*, pp. 152, 157; Calovius, *Systema*, i. p. 278; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 45.

On the other hand, it is true of reason also that its use extends to both parts of theology. Only the kind of use made of reason is different in Natural and in Revealed theology.

A distinction must be drawn between a formal and a material use of reason. The former is permitted, and is indeed indispensable, in all parts of theology. Without it there can be no knowledge at all; it is necessary and universal. Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric are more particularly mentioned as sciences whose aid can be dispensed with nowhere, and therefore not in theology. Along with the formal principles which are set forth in these disciplines, there are also material principles of reason; and as regards the use of them theology is bound by certain restrictions.[1]

True, it must be allowed that the use of them is not unconditionally rejected in theology. Even reason knows something of God; thence arises Natural Theology. The latter is produced therefore by means of a material use of reason. But the use must be restricted in the sphere of *theologia revelata*, the sole and specific authority in which is Holy Scripture. Here it never has a positive significance; it does not serve for a basis or for a proof; but must be adopted in practice only with the greatest caution and as a secondary resource. For it can be adopted only in so far as it is advantageous, when once a dogma has been developed from Holy Scripture, and so secured against all objections, to furnish a subsequent proof that the

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, i. p. 76, ii. p. 373; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 107; Calovius, *Systema*, i. p. 358 seq.; Quenstedt, *Theologia*, p. 38 seq.; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 68 seq.

opposite to it is not merely in contradiction with the enlightened reason, but even with the natural reason.[1] Wherefore also a moderate study of philosophy is to be recommended.[2] On the other hand, if reason is made the supreme principle in theology as in other sciences, then it results *per accidens*, though it is not essentially the case, that theology and philosophy, reason and revelation, come to be in contradiction with each other. But that happens only when reason presumes to give a judgment in a sphere where it is simply incapable of giving one. Its sphere is that of finite things; if it goes beyond it, and judges concerning theological truths like the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, that is a μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος such as we know one is careful to avoid elsewhere.[3] It is exactly the same thing as if a shoemaker, suppose, wanted to judge of painting by the rules of his shoemaking craft.[4] Now, if this is not done, as it must not and cannot reasonably be done, there occurs no contradiction between reason and revelation; the two are thoroughly compatible with each other, each restricting itself to its peculiar sphere.[5]

These assertions are taken in the first instance from Lutheran theology, but in principle the Reformed divines agree with them. They too reject the judgment of reason on the fine points of dogma, and deny

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, i. p. 77; Baier, *Compendium*, pp. 107, 109; Calovius, *Systema*, p. 361.
[2] Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 27.
[3] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. pp. 10, 371, 372; Calovius, *Systema*, i. p. 67 seq.
[4] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 373.
[5] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. pp. 369–374; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 29.

that there is any contradiction between theology and philosophy, so far as each of them keeps within the limits marked for it. However, while there is this general agreement, the Reformed theologians went on to allow somewhat larger scope to reason.[1] They liked, indeed, to reproach the Lutherans for their unreason, a charge which the latter of course earnestly repelled and refuted.[2] On the other hand, in their theological works they did not occupy themselves with the controversy, as a whole, so thoroughly as did the Lutheran divines. There are both compends and exhaustive systems of Reformed Dogmatics which do not discuss the relation of reason to revelation at all,[3] whereas among the Lutherans in works of each kind it is almost always done. But these points of difference do not concern us further here; as regards the point of importance here, there was no dispute between the Lutherans and the Reformed theologians.

It is plain, however, that this outline of Dogmatics is simply a reproduction of the Scholastic doctrine, and here again approximates most closely towards that of Aquinas. No characteristic feature of the latter is wanting. The division of the matter and the relation of the two halves to each other are thus pretty much the same. A difference can be traced only in so far *as things have been pushed farther in favour of the principle of authority, and therefore to the disadvantage of reason.* Not, it is true, in the manner in which this was done by the later Nominalists among the

[1] Gass, *Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik*, i. pp. 211 f., 384.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 213.
[3] *E.g.* Polanus, *Syntagma theologiæ*, and Wolleb, *Compendium theologiæ.*

Schoolmen. Theology is not put out of the domain of science proper. The standpoint of Aquinas is in general retained; and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as always before, theology claims the position due to it as the Queen of the sciences. But yet the recognition of reason has become more qualified than it is in the case of Aquinas: it is warned to keep within its limits with still more energy and feeling than is shown by him. And that cannot create surprise. In this we have simply an expression of the fact that in the intervening period the empirical, rationalistic mode of thought had gained supremacy still more decidedly than it had done in the time of Aquinas. All the more urgently, therefore, did the speculative dogmas require to be withheld from the judgment of "reason."

In the next place, now, the proofs have to be considered by which orthodox Dogmatics justifies the principle of authority furnished by divine Revelation. For if it seems at first sight as if the duty of supplying proof in this matter were fulfilled by the doctrine regarding Revelation, Scripture, and Inspiration, it is quite clear nevertheless that that is not the case. Doubtless the infallible authority of Scripture is inferred from its divine origin; by some, indeed, the principle is reduced accordingly to the form of a regular syllogism.[1] But it cannot be affirmed that the divine origin of Holy Scripture is a truth which is in closer accord with reason, or which is more manifest, than what is thus inferred from it. If the proof is to be made complete, there is a pressing necessity that it

[1] *E.g.* Baier, *Compendium*, p. 40.

should be shown how man comes to have a firm conviction with regard to the former truth.

This position is one which the writers on Dogmatics also clearly realised. Individual authors themselves show in the manner just indicated that the proof given in the doctrine of Inspiration requires a supplement of the kind alluded to. Thus Musäus says quite correctly that the divine origin of Holy Scripture, as evidenced by the doctrine of Inspiration, is the objective basis of its infallible authority, but that something else must come in addition *ex parte hominum*, to convince them, viz. men, of that origin of Scripture. And then from this point of view he treats of the twofold faith in Holy Scripture, of the *fides humana*, and the *fides divina*.[1]

In fact it is these deliverances that here supply the proof required by way of supplement to the doctrine of Inspiration. We observe that the proof is modified in this way in a manner which is unknown to the Schoolmen. For from the first it has a relation to Holy Scripture; all is centred in the latter; the proof of its divine origin is what is aimed at. That is a consequence of the renovation in the sphere of doctrine which was treated of above, and which was brought about by the Reformation. Even the matter which is dealt with in this framework is only in part the same as in the age of Scholasticism. As regards the most important point, viz. where the question relates to the *fides divina*, which alone in the last resort is of value, it extends beyond the previous limits.

The deliverances themselves, stated with the utmost

[1] Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 292 seq.

brevity, run thus. Faith in Holy Scripture and its divine origin (a faith which is really an understood thing among Christians who have been born and brought up in the Church)[1] is called forth by the divine power which is inherent in Holy Scripture. That power appears in the first instance in certain characteristics which are recognisable by every one, and in that way those of its original adversaries who can be saved at all are first brought to a provisional recognition of its authority.[2] That is the *fides humana*. Its value consists in this, that it serves as a preparation for what is higher, paving the way for the *fides divina*, the true certainty that cannot be shaken. This latter faith, which is the only kind that matters in the last resort, is on its side called forth neither by the testimony of the Church nor by any token of trustworthiness which accompanies Holy Scripture either externally or internally. What calls it forth is simply and solely the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum*.[3] Now, the divine origin of Holy Scripture is the object of this witness and of the faith awakened by it. Only some also mention along with that the assent given to the content of Revelation.[4] But all mention as of chief importance, and many mention solely, the conviction as to the divine origin of Holy Scripture; and that origin is understood of course in the sense of the

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 36.

[2] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 37 seq.; Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 303 seq.; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 58 seq.; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 106 seq.

[3] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 43; Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 299; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 73 seq.; Quenstedt, *Theologia*, p. 97; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 116; Polanus a Polansdorf, *Syntagma theologiæ*, Hanoviæ, 1610, p. 117 seq.; Wendelin, *Systema theologiæ majus*, Cassellis, 1656, p. 46 seq.

[4] Musæus, Baier, and Calovius at least indicate something of the kind.

orthodox doctrine of Inspiration. Thus the question is about a supplement to the proof contained in that doctrine.

According to Aquinas, it is not unwise to subject oneself to the authority of ecclesiastical faith, since many characteristics which are comprehensible even by common reason attest the reality of its divine origin. These characteristics are about the same as those regarding which the writers on Dogmatics teach that they produce the *fides humana*. In this relation there appears only the above-mentioned point of difference, viz. that the Protestant theologians have in view the authority of Holy Scripture especially as the object to be proved. The declarations as to the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum* are new, and in particular also the fact that it is to them that decisive importance is really ascribed. But that is occasioned by the change in the situation due to the Reformation. In the demonstration which he furnishes, Aquinas requires to think only of the Reason which might possibly oppose the authority of Faith. The Protestant theologians must be careful at the same time to justify and defend their presentation of the principle of authority as against the claim of the Catholic Church. And this purpose is served by the mutually supplementary conclusions in regard to Inspiration and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Again, it cannot occur to the Schoolman to consider the proof chiefly in relation to the personal faith of the individual. God deals with individuals through the Church. It is important only that the authority of the Church should be justified in the sight of reason in general. The Reformation, on

the contrary, had opposed the personal faith of the individual, and the direct reference of it to divine revelation, to the Catholic ecclesiastical system. Hence, too, the proof for the authority of divine revelation in Protestant Dogmatics must take account of that fact.

Thus in many not unessential points the Protestant doctrine is distinguished from the Scholastic. But as for a real transformation of principles, nothing of the kind is to be observed. The ground is kept which is offered by Scholasticism. In the theological system handed on by the latter, those changes are introduced which the Reformation with its principles renders indispensable. Such is the origin of the doctrine.

Finally, we have still to consider the connection in which the formal conclusions relating to the groundwork of doctrine stand in the general theory of the Protestant Church. Here too it is the anthropological doctrines that are of importance. Before the Fall—so it is there said—man possessed a perfect knowledge of God; his reason then sufficed to put that within his reach; and in that way the goal of everlasting blessedness was also placed within the sphere compassed by the powers originally belonging to him.[1] Reason, however, was darkened by the Fall.[2] Of the original knowledge of God there is now only that meagre remainder preserved which lies at the basis of Natural Theology. Now, as that is not sufficient for salvation, men would be lost if divine grace had not supplied a way of life. But this was done, viz. by divine revela-

[1] Chemnitz, *Loci*, iii. p. 215; Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 371; Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 45; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 12.

[2] Chemnitz, *Loci*, iii. p. 216; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 301.

tion, which is contained for us of the present day in Holy Scripture. The person who submits to its influence is converted by the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells in it. And with conversion there is inward enlightenment combined. In the process of conversion, the natural and defective reason of man is enlightened.[1] This reason so enlightened is then competent to act in the sphere of theology. It is no longer true of it, as was true of the reason of fallen man, that it opposes the revealed truth of the divine Word.[2]

But what is meant by *an enlightened reason?* We naturally think of a restoration of what the first man possessed, of a reason which knows itself to be in intimate accord with divine Revelation, which recognises in Revelation the principle of its (reason's) own completion. But the matter is not so understood by the old teachers. In spite of the enlightenment, the opposition of reason to revelation does not really cease; but it is moved by the will to restrict itself to its own department, *i.e.* to finite things, and in matters of theology to resign its judgment in favour of Revelation. Thus what is enlightened is simply that reason which recognises Holy Scripture as the infallible source of divine truth. The Fall—so the matter might perhaps be expressed—has left the formal powers of reason intact, it is true, but the material powers as relating to theology have been lost owing to it, all but a poor remainder. And now the illumina-

[1] Baier, *Compendium*, p. 419.

[2] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 371; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 70; Calovius, *Systema*, i. p. 363 seq.

tion consists not in a real essential renovation of these, but in the fact that Holy Scripture moves into the blank created by the Fall. Thus too the opposition between reason and revelation is not completely removed: as the battle between the flesh and the spirit does not cease in this earthly life, there also continues to be a resistance on the part of the natural intellect to supernatural truth.[1]

In the teaching of Aquinas these conclusions are represented by the theory that the supernatural goal of man transcends the powers of natural reason, that therefore the chief doctrines of Revelation remain undemonstrable and inconceivable mysteries. The difference is that Aquinas deduces his doctrine from the finite character of human reason, whereas the Protestant divines argue from the lasting enfeeblement of all the mental powers of man by sin. But that is a difference which cannot be rated as great. We formerly saw that even the mediæval theologians are not averse to speaking of sin in this connection; indeed, that that is the commoner way even with them. And we saw at the same time that it is the Catholic doctrine of man's first state that mediates between this view and that of Aquinas, and indeed shows the two to be substantially identical doctrinal conceptions, differing from each other only in form (p. 185).

What is certainly new in the Protestant construction is only the assertion that the first man possessed a perfect knowledge of God, and that this possession belonged to his original nature. That assertion is connected with the new doctrine of Evangelical theology

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 372.

as to the original state. Now no one will deny the import of the alteration effected on this doctrine by the Reformation. In the first place, in the framework of ecclesiastical theology the Evangelical doctrine of the original state is the indispensable presupposition of the Evangelical doctrine of sin and salvation. Apart from this, it gives expression to the Protestant restoration of the purely Christian ideal of life. And thus in the Church of the Reformation, in more than one relation, it had rich results as respects the creation of practical piety. But if we ask whether *theology* and its *doctrinal groundwork* were also benefited by that, the question must be answered in the negative. Even as regards the point where this should have been the result, viz. in the case of the doctrine of the enlightened reason of the Christian, the consequence of the idea is denied and again turned into the channel of the Scholastic doctrine. And however great value may be ascribed from the point of view of knowledge to the conclusions regarding the original state in themselves, it cannot really be denied that in a subject like that here treated of, what is of chief significance is the inference deduced from it with a view to judging the present condition of things. If this very inference is omitted, the hopeful renovation of Protestant Dogmatics that was spoken of loses all value so far as respects the groundwork of doctrine.

However, I am not of opinion that the writers on Dogmatics could have drawn this inference at all in the theological connection which their doctrine represents. If we view the whole position, it was rather consistent on their part not to do so. And it was so

for this reason, that on the whole they only brought about a modification of the Scholastic doctrine. All the details to which we have been directing our attention give evidence of this. And we cannot be surprised at it, if we reflect that in Protestant Dogmatics too the leading fundamental ideas of mediæval Catholic theology were kept up, ideas which the Middle Ages again took over in turn from the early Church and its theology. So too it no longer seems strange in that case that notwithstanding its superior religious position Protestant Dogmatics sometimes has the worst of it—theoretically—with its peculiar theses opposed to the Catholic theology. However, that matter is of such import that we must make it the subject of a further special study.

The leading idea of the Catholic Scholastic System is the blessedness of man as something supernatural: it consists in the future perfected knowledge of God, which is pronounced to be no longer faith but sight; it is related to the natural powers of man's mind in such wise that it is unattainable by them, that any appropriation of it can result only through the instrumentality of divine grace, and that therefore the proper truths of Revelation remain so far as reason is concerned, undemonstrable and inconceivable.[1]

The peculiarity of this leading idea does not consist in the fact that it proves to be an idea of the chief good: in a religious system that is rather what is natural and requisite. And it does not consist in the fact that the chief good is thought of as participation in the divine life: on the ground of Christianity as on

that of every formally completed religion, this further specification is understood as a matter of course. The peculiarity of the idea, in the Scholastic Catholic conception of it, consists firstly in the fact that participation in the life of God is not thought of as merely bound up in a general way with the knowledge of God, but is identified in a very special manner with that knowledge, and then further in the emphasis laid on its supernatural character, which exalts it above all the rational powers of the human mind, and makes it appear something that is superadded to the mental nature of man.

The former characteristic attaches even to the early Catholic theology, to the period in which ecclesiastical dogma arose. It rests on the combination of religion, knowledge, and moral life which we formerly acknowledged to be the basis of the whole structure of dogma. Not so the latter characteristic. In the positive form in which we now have it, it only gained a firm hold in the Middle Ages, and in such wise, moreover, that the varying philosophical currents of the Middle Ages were very vitally concerned in giving it such a hold. But yet the roots of this second element are always found even in the first; and the traces of it therefore reach very far back in the history of Christian theology. For if the Christian faith that divine Revelation is of permanent significance for the Christian religion is to be maintained under the general presupposition that the chief good is the knowledge of God, that must lead in some way or other to such a view as that referred to. Otherwise the result would be that the knowledge of God has doubtless attained perfection in

Christianity, but now that this perfection has once been set before us, reason, starting simply from itself as a basis, proceeding on its own principles, can reach the goal proposed for it, and consequently Revelation possesses only a relative value for it.

Man's active moral life, I observe once more, has on such a theory a subordinate position assigned to it. Certainly that life, its form and conduct, is by no means declared to be a matter of indifference. Such a conclusion is impossible on Christian ground, and therefore also in the Catholic Church. But it comes into view only as a secondary consideration. For when the subject is thus contemplated, the supernatural aim of the Christian does not lie in this plane of morality, but in that of the theoretical mind, in that of knowledge. Nothing is known of the truth that the fulfilment of the divine commandments is itself *a factor of man's blessedness*, and directly promotes the growth of Christian knowledge of God. No; if, as is true, obedience is an indispensable *condition* of blessedness, and therefore also not a matter of indifference as bearing on the knowledge of God, yet that blessedness itself consists in the perfection of knowledge as such.

This is just the point in the next place that determines the valuation of theology, that decides as to the position it has assigned to it. In this connection theology acquires the significance of being a *direct means of attaining to blessedness*. Just as in other spheres it is true that one science depends on another which is superior to it, in such a way as to derive its principles from the latter, so in like manner theology has a science ranking above it, from which *its* principles

are drawn.[1] That is God's knowledge of Himself. But it is just this perfect knowledge which God has of Himself that constitutes the blessedness of God; and to be esteemed worthy of participation in that knowledge means having part in God's blessedness by growing into His likeness. Thus, while one is working at Christian theology, he is there and then pursuing the way to blessedness. Only, of course, even in this case the reservation must be made, that the aim is not perfectly accomplished in the world, because here faith does not become sight; that therefore in comparison with other sciences theological science retains necessary defects, because its principles are derived from the supernaturally communicated knowledge of God, and are therefore as inconceivable as they are undemonstrable. But that does not compromise the value and significance of theology. It has the highest value; it is a direct means for procuring blessedness, means of such a kind that it is similar to the very end to be reached, so that in the use of it there is already a slight commencement made in the enjoyment of the achieved result.

To all this now Protestant theology held fast. We may open whatever work on Dogmatics we please, an exhaustive system or a compendium, the work of a Lutheran or of a Reformed writer; we find these principles and no others expressed in it. The chief good or the blessedness of man consists in the perfected knowledge of God, which will be realised in eternal life as seeing face to face. In the world, therefore, we come nearest to the highest aim of man when we are

[1] Cf. Aquinas, *Summa tot. theol.* i. qu. 1, art. 2.

on the path leading to the knowledge of God. And further, the position and significance of theology are estimated in accordance with this view. Theology is a faint copy of the knowledge which God has of Himself, being the *theologia ectypa* which corresponds in man to the *theologia archetypa* in God. In the manner just described theology is a direct means of attaining to blessedness. That is the point of importance for us here. Let us dwell somewhat longer on the conception of theology as thus determined.

It asserts itself, in the first instance, in the fact that the orthodox writers on Dogmatics, as a body, using various modes of expression but agreeing as to the substance, declare theology to be a *scientia practica*.

Let us first offer a few remarks on the development of this thesis within the sphere of Dogmatics itself. As is well known, George Calixtus introduced the analytic method, whereas up to his time the synthetic method had universally prevailed—without, however, being strictly carried out.[1] What was called synthetic was the procedure of those who began with the doctrine of God and developed the rest of the doctrines from it in the order of their genesis, so that Eschatology formed the close. On the analytic method, on the other hand, the doctrine of God was followed by that of the eternal salvation of man as the purpose He has in view; and the remaining doctrines were developed from the point of view which represented them as setting forth the means for the fulfilment of the purpose. Evidently the accentuation of the practical character of theology must have been increased by the

[1] Gass, *Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik*, i. p. 304 f.

latter method. But the thesis itself is by no means tied down to this later method, but is found quite as well in the earlier writers like Chemnitz and Gerhard.[1] It is then more exhaustively treated by those like Musæus, Baier, Calov, and others who followed the example of Calixtus. And further, Calov now proves the practical character of theology again from the fact that the analytic method is peculiar to it.[2] But the thesis itself by no means stands or falls with that method. And it is therefore to be found among the Reformed divines as well as among the Lutheran. Although the former, on the whole, stood by the synthetic method,[3] they too nevertheless declared theology to be a practical science.[4]

But if we ask what this declaration means, we must seek the answer to the question in the Aristotelian philosophy. Our Protestant writers on Dogmatics consciously adopted that declaration from the Schoolmen; even Gerhard does not omit to enumerate the deliverances of individual Schoolmen on the question, and to deal with them.[5] But in Scholasticism the thesis appeared after Alexander of Hales had turned the increased knowledge of Aristotle's philosophy to account for theological subjects. That meant nothing else than ranking theology in its place in the scheme according to which Aristotle classifies the sciences.

[1] Chemnitz, *Loci*, i. pp. 17, 19; Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 4.

[2] *Systema*, i. p. 30.

[3] Only Keckermann adopted the analytic method (according to Gass, *loc. cit.* i. p. 390).

[4] Keckermann, *Systema theologiæ*, Hanoviæ, pp. 9–12; Polanus, *Syntagma*, i. p. 75 seq.; Wolleb, *Compendium theologiæ*, Amstelodami, 1633, p. 2; Wendelin, *Systema*, p. 2 seq.

[5] *Loci*, ii. p. 4.

That scheme is thus simply assumed to be valid. Even the Protestants appeal with regard to this definition to the authority of Aristotle.

Now, according to Aristotle, the difference between the theoretical and practical disciplines consists in this, that the former have for their aim the knowledge of truth, whereas in the case of the latter the ultimate object is the regulation of conduct. But it is conceivable how the Schoolmen formed different views regarding the position of theology in this scheme. For if the *visio* or *fruitio Dei* is the highest aim of man, and if revealed theology prepares him for it, this aim can be conceived in a twofold manner, either as the perfected knowledge of the highest truth, or as the terminal point of practical action and experience. But the definition of theology will take a different form according to the judgment pronounced on this matter. Aquinas, *e.g.*, who, as was formerly mentioned, occasionally classes theology with the *philosophia prima*, declares it accordingly to be *magis speculativa*.[1] Others draw the opposite conclusion, while others again declare it to be a *habitus mixtus*. On the whole, among the later Schoolmen, who were inclined to the Nominalistic theory, the conception of theology as a practical discipline was that which prevailed. And that is the unanimous decision of the Protestant theologians.

But this only means that among them—still more decidedly than is the case with Aquinas—theology is valued principally as a direct means of attaining to salvation. And then that very fact is stated in

[1] *Summa totius theologiæ*, i. qu. 1, art. 4.

express language. Many things, it is true, are mentioned as the aim of theology. But in the last resort, eternal salvation, or the *fruitio Dei*, is universally declared to be what constitutes its highest aim.[1] Doubtless the glory of God lies beyond that again, of which mention is made as the highest aim of all.[2] But as it is said of this glory of God, again, that it consists in effecting the salvation of His creatures, we may take no notice of it here. Only we ought not to omit to mention that this consideration of the glory of God—conceivably enough—has special stress laid on it in Reformed Dogmatics. It does not establish a real distinction, as it is not wanting even in Lutheran Dogmatics, and the Reformed writers themselves immediately turn round again to the eternal salvation of men.[3]

Thus in Protestant Dogmatics the leading idea of the Catholic Scholastic system is quite expressly and energetically maintained, and so too is the significance which theology has assigned to it in consequence. Theology as theology is a direct means for attaining to salvation. Now, it is customary, doubtless, to pass lightly over this matter by pronouncing curtly that that is a confusion of theology with saving faith. Certainly this assertion is also correct. But it is not correct if one supposes the matter to be settled in that way. For if Calov, in representing such an objection to himself, declares it to be a hallucination to seek to distinguish between the purpose of the theologian and

[1] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. pp. 5, 11; Musæus, *Introductio*, p. 130; Baier, *Compendium*, p. 22; Calovius, *Systema*, i. pp. 8, 28; Hollatius, *Examen*, p. 8.

[2] Gerhard, *Loci*, ii. p. 11; Calovius, *Systema*, i. p. 8.

[3] Wolleb, *Compendium*, p. 11; Wendelin, *Systema*, pp. 3, 10.

that of theology,[1] that again is a perfectly sound judgment from the standpoint of orthodox Dogmatics. It is impossible to let a change occur on the *one* point that relates to the groundwork of principle on which all theological study is based, and for the rest to leave everything as it was: in consistency, the whole must be taken into the bargain; or else it is necessary to advance from this one point to the acknowledgment of the fact that theology in the old Dogmatics is still dependent to a vast extent on the Catholic Scholastic system.

However, it must not be asserted by any means that there is any necessary connection between the principle here dealt with and that false conception and practice of piety which we are accustomed to describe slightingly as mere orthodoxy. Doubtless the fact confronts us, that for a long period in the Protestant Church that was the effect of the principle. And that is the one possibility: in virtue of the practical character of theology, although in truth it consists of mere theoretical conclusions in the strict sense (not such as are suggested by practice), theological orthodoxy is declared to be the principal requisite for attaining to salvation. But that cannot be allowed. The other course is equally possible, viz. on that account to let the scientific character of theology pass into the background, and to make theological discussion approximate to pious meditation. The leading idea allows of that quite well, particularly for the reason that the knowledge of God, in which according to it man's blessedness consists, can not merely be understood as being

[1] *Systema*, i. p. 9.

mystical and practical as well, but originally indeed, at the time of the formation of dogma, was conceived mainly in that sense.

What is of importance, in my view, is rather the other fact, that as the result of the principle we refer to, the whole study of Dogmatics is confined to the pre-Reformation, Catholic, Scholastic ground. Thus that truth has been shown in the preceding pages likewise, with reference to the groundwork of doctrine contained in orthodox Dogmatics. This connection of that doctrinal groundwork with the principle now treated of, may be further illustrated by two specially important points.

The first is the conception of divine revelation, according to which it consists in the supernatural communication of theological knowledge. This conception is necessary so long as the ground is adhered to that the chief good is the knowledge of God, and that theology is therefore a direct means for attaining to salvation. On that supposition the correct notion of Revelation itself requires such a view to be taken of it. For as, rightly conceived, it is a manifestation made by God for salvation, it must consist in the communication of theological doctrines, if the chief good is of the nature which has been described. As such a communication it simply attains and realises its *practical* purpose. And yet, owing to this conception of revelation, Protestant theology becomes involved in the greatest difficulties. So long as Holy Scripture is conceived, as the Catholic Church conceives it, in union with the doctrine developed by the Church, and so long as the latter is made superior to the former, as being

the principle of exegesis, revelation really consists in a complex of theological doctrines. But if we abstract from this and conceive Holy Scripture as what it really is, at once it is plain that it is of quite a different nature, that it is a complex of historical records. Now it is no less true, as we are often enough reminded by Catholic disputants, that we get into difficulty with the exegesis of Scripture. If we adopt a purely historical method of exegesis, Scripture does not fill the position assigned to it in the connection referred to. But on Protestant ground any other exegesis leads to arbitrariness. In particular, there is no expectation more foolish than the supposition that the doctrine of Inspiration, carried out consistently, imposes a restriction which would prevent that evil. It rather serves to confirm the arbitrariness of the exegesis. That is proved not least of all by the practice in Exegetics followed by orthodox Dogmatics. It knows nothing of a thorough-going historical exegesis. What give unity and fixity to orthodox exegesis are the traditional notions of theology which are embraced, the same element therefore in virtue of which it is not seldom found to be in opposition to the historical sense of Scripture. But shall we be surprised at these difficulties, if we reflect that the new ideas are asserted here in a connection which represents the fundamental Catholic idea? Nothing indeed is more natural than that Catholic practice should be thoroughly compatible with the latter idea; but that cannot be said of the Protestant principle, seeing that it properly signifies a denial of the Catholic system.

The other point is the Dualism of a natural species

of truth comprehensible by reason and a supernatural species transcending reason. That Protestant Dogmatics has adhered to that Dualism, can create no surprise, since it confesses its acceptance of the leading fundamental thought of the Catholic system, with which that Dualism is so closely connected. But there is scarcely anything else that represents so distinctly the character of Catholicism as that dichotomy of Christian truth. It corresponds to the external Supernaturalism which pervades the whole Catholic system, and is asserted here in the sphere of practice no less than in that of theory (p. 187). The mysterious doctrines are a direct counterpart to the mysterious actions of the Church, in which, according to Catholic principles, the main feature of piety consists (p. 152). But now in the sphere of Protestantism, where this main feature is transferred to divine revelation, how does piety consist in nothing but the obedience of faith to those doctrines? Is it enough here, where the Christian is referred to revelation as the sole source of all strength and all consolation, to regard the truths which it announces as mysteries first and foremost, and also to see their distinctive value precisely in the fact that they are of that nature? Undoubtedly even among us there is a rationalistic method of reasoning about God and the world corresponding to the habits of thought identified with common reason. And it is no less true that here the religious craving which reaches out beyond the world is given as the point at which a *Salto mortale* as it were out of Rationalism into the sphere of the Transcendental, Mystical, Mysterious, then proves successful (p. 183). But in truth

on such procedure Christianity suffers. Just as little can the Apologetics suffice that appeals to common prejudices, which on a closer examination do not prove to be warranted. Notwithstanding, on the often-mentioned supposition, all this must be adhered to, if any effect is to be given to the permanent significance of divine revelation for the Christian religion. Thus in respect to this point also, Protestant Dogmatics has been fettered by clinging to the leading idea of the Catholic system.

Not as though the charge should be brought against orthodox Dogmatics here that it stuck fast as it were in the Catholic system. The fact that it took up the peculiar position which we have described, is rather due to the nature of Protestantism, to the circumstance that it arose as a new formation of Western Latin Christianity, and in consequence of that continued to be implicated in many ways in Catholic dogma. Orthodox Dogmatics especially cannot be denied the credit of having accomplished all that could be done to carry out the religious thesis of Protestantism, *i.e.* of renovated genuine Christianity, while using the theological material of Catholic Scholasticism. But it was unable to accomplish what was impossible, to solve the problem thereby presented. In spite of its superior religious position, which it often triumphantly defends in particular instances, it gets the worst of it on the whole as against the Catholic adversary, because it erroneously grants his major premiss. But what is here maintained, and what attention is directed to, is only the fact that orthodox Dogmatics is situated in the way we have just described.

Should this, however, appear a mere assertion, I appeal to the evidence of history. The succeeding history of dogma, as is well known, is the history of its decomposition. With this we have now to occupy ourselves further. And this itself proves clearly and impressively enough that such Dogmatics as that of orthodoxy, and all that is formed on the model of it, is of no service to the Evangelical Church, and that the latter cannot permanently sort with it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BREAKING UP OF ECCLESIASTICAL DOGMA.

The derivation of Ecclesiastical Rationalism from Orthodox Dogmatics—Explanation of this process from the relation of Catholic Dogma to the Evangelical Faith—The Philosophy of Kant as the terminal point of the preceding development and the starting-point of that which followed—The reconciliation of Faith and Knowledge in the Speculative Philosophy attaching to Kant, and the abrupt termination of it.

THE period of the formation and development of ecclesiastical dogma was followed by that of the breaking up and destruction of it. Now the process of destruction has two stages of advance, and the philosophy of Kant may be described as the turning-point between them. In the first instance, those dogmas which we described as speculative were transformed and ultimately set aside. Then in connection with the philosophy of Kant there arose a reaction of the speculative, mystical type of thought against Rationalism. And this turned to the advantage of the speculative articles of dogma; but what seemed at first a philosophical restoration and re-establishment of the basal doctrines of the Church, and indeed a final reconciliation of faith and knowledge, proved in the end to be a complete breaking up of those doctrines. On the other hand, the basis which dogma had found in empirical thought maintained its reputation down to the time of Kant; it was then deprived by him of

the supports it obtained from general theoretical philosophy, but was established anew by means of practical philosophy. As, however, the impulse thus proceeding from Kant led chiefly to a revival of speculative philosophy, the rational dogmas were transformed by the latter in *its own* sense, and thus were implicated with the others in the process of destruction. Thus in the Kantian philosophy the two elements in the process are combined with one another in a very noteworthy manner. We first turn our attention to that development which reached its temporary close in the Critical Philosophy.

That is the development in which ecclesiastical Rationalism arose out of orthodox Dogmatics. Now what has to be said of it first of all, is that it was accomplished gradually and without abrupt transitions. To illustrate from sense, we take a straight line as representing the connection of orthodox Dogmatics with the *Aufklärung* and Rationalism. From this it follows that the whole process, far apart as the starting and terminal points are from one another, was accomplished within the framework of a common fundamental conception. Now that conception, and consequently the element that connects all the phases of the process with one another, is simply the conception of the chief good which lay at the foundation of dogma from the very first, that by which the relation presupposed in dogma between religion and knowledge is determined, and in which also is rooted the view of revelation which governed dogma. Nowhere does any representative of this development who comes under our notice betray any consciousness of the fact

that a difference in principle exists between religious faith and theoretical knowledge. Just as little do we meet within the compass of that development with the idea that Revelation is anything else than a source of supernatural instruction in theology.

Pietism, too, with its Dogmatics, undeniably forms a link in this chain—apart from special offshoots in which it passes into fanaticism and sets the inner light above Revelation. To conceive the manner in which Pietism has a place in the whole with which we are concerned, we have only to bear in mind the fact that the fundamental idea of the knowledge of God as the chief good can also be viewed in the mystical and practical sense. For as soon as such a view is entertained, and the practical nature of piety is accentuated on the ground of the old Dogmatics and by the means which it supplies, Pietism arises, or at all events something that looks very like it. Undoubtedly, however, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Pietism assumes an exceptional position, in so far as it opposes on its part that one-sided prominence given to theory in matters of faith and piety, which is common to Orthodoxy and Rationalism. Looked at from this point of view, Orthodoxy and Rationalism join each other in opposition to Pietism. Of course from another point of view, viz. that of the rights which are conceded to subjectivity in religious and ecclesiastical matters, Pietism joins with the *Aufklärung* in opposition to Orthodoxy. But it is just this many-sided implication of Pietism in the other phases of the development that most conclusively proves it to be an essential link in the chain. We do full justice to its peculiar nature in the present connection,

if we point out that it modified the common primary conception, and drew from it a conclusion that is foreign to the other outgrowths—a conclusion, however, to which it could not give effect. The really progressive development of Dogmatics goes lightly over it, or passes it by, as the case may be. What is finally adhered to is not merely the primary conception which Pietism shares with the rest, but likewise the other issue that faith and piety are understood chiefly as assent to definite doctrines.

But in what, now, does that development consist which took place within the scope of this primary conception? Simply in the fact *that the speculative dogmas of the traditional system were softened, transformed, and finally put aside altogether.* Orthodox Dogmatics represents and defends the whole tradition in Dogmatics down to its finest points, and itself multiplies them with practised skill, and draws them out to still greater fineness. The rational truth of religion embraced by the adherents of the *Aufklärung* and by the Rationalists comprises only the doctrines which resulted from the union of the Christian faith with the rational and empirical type of thought. On the other hand, the speculative dogmas one and all are put aside by these thinkers as irrational, and along with them there has also vanished faith in a Revelation by the authority of which they were established. If now these are the two terminal points of the process we are concerned with, it is plain that the development itself consisted only in what was stated above. But then it follows further from this, that at the back of it there lies an advance of the rational and empirical type of thought

which is more and more victorious, and which ends in a complete overthrow of everything of the nature of speculation or mysticism, or by doing away entirely with everything related to these in the traditional body of dogma.

But if this is the case, it is not correct to regard the development from Orthodoxy to Rationalism as something new or as a special phase at all in the history of scientific Dogmatics. I say quite advisedly—in the history of *scientific Dogmatics*. For in the history of the *Christian Church* it was of course something new, something as yet unprecedented, when the opposition to Revelation and Dogma attained in it, so to say, to official predominance. But in Dogmatics what led to this result is nothing but the direct continuation of a process begun long before. We ought not for a moment to imagine that in the perfected orthodox system the summit of the hill was reached, and that it came to be a question of continuing in the sense in which the road downhill on the other side is a continuation of the road uphill on the side first reached. There is rather a continuation *in a straight line on the same plane*. The beginnings of this development lie in Scholasticism, viz. in the time between Anselm and Aquinas. For the process was then begun which is here continued and completed, and which is denoted by the fact that the reason that holds sway is shaped by the Aristotelian philosophy, instead of speculative Platonism as in the time of the Fathers.

Thus then orthodox Dogmatics itself is found to be a phase of a process which was begun long before it and extends far beyond it.

Here we call to mind the circumstance by which the indispensable mediation between authority and reason is supplied on the ground of dogma. It is the circumstance, viz., that what is understood by these, what forms the content of the two principles, flowed from the same source—from the tradition of ancient philosophy and from the ecclesiastical theology which arose under its influence. That same relation is also maintained on the ground of Protestantism. And it is maintained, moreover, in such wise that the philosophy of Aristotle in the mediæval conception of it, which turned upon its formalism, retains its supremacy. For in the Church of the Reformation men were very soon brought back again to that philosophy, under the leadership of the same Melanchthon who at first vehemently assailed it. Indeed, the philosophy of the Protestant schools drew in the orthodox period from late Catholic sources,[1] so that no doubt can arise as to the connection which exists here. Even the circumstance that alongside of Aristotelianism the movement that started with Petrus Ramus was maintained in part in opposition to the other, makes no difference in the position of matters. For Ramism, as it is called, is really nothing but a farther variety in the sphere of formal philosophy.[2] Only we previously observed that the distrust of reason in Protestant Dogmatics, if the latter is compared with the Thomistic theology, has still further increased. And we explained that as being due to the later forms of Mediæval Scholastic philosophy, which conceivably enough did not remain

[1] Gass, *Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik*, i. p. 185.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 184.

without influence. But in that way too, if we draw a comparison with the general prototype of orthodox doctrine, viz. Thomism, we see that *a forward step was taken by that doctrine itself*, in the direction in which the whole development proceeds. Or, in other words, orthodox Dogmatics is itself found to be a phase of that process of advance which was accomplished on the part of rational and empirical thought.

In connection with what has been said, there naturally comes next a more general consideration relating to the succeeding course of the history. For if this accentuation and resolute maintenance of empirical rationality and its formal Categories always makes greater advances, the immediate consequence is that the principle of Authority gains in stringency and in its character as an absolute principle. For with that very advance it becomes always more urgently necessary to establish otherwise than by reason the speculative conclusions of tradition, which are not settled by the accepted use of reason, and to secure them against its objections. But now there is a limit to that, which is very definitely fixed. For however far one goes in that direction, it must still be clearly shown in some way what interest living people have in conclusions of the sort, in those that are established otherwise than by reason, and what kind of connection exists between them and the personal life of man. If the limit which is thus marked is exceeded, or if the general conditions of mental life serve to loosen this bond, it is then only the direct continuation of the preceding process, if in the first place the attempt is made to take another meaning out of those conclusions, a meaning in harmony with

empirical rationality, and if, finally, inasmuch as such attempts at mediation cannot be permanently maintained, there results a separation and rejection of those doctrines which are opposed to the reason that is in power. Thus *even in orthodox Dogmatics the way was prepared for the further course of the history*, although no doubt an impulse from without was required in order that it might be completed.

But the same sort of preparation appeared in another way as well. The following is a more particular account of the matter :—

In orthodox Dogmatics the *formal use of reason* was unhesitatingly allowed. And not merely that; it was demanded and in every way encouraged. The old theologians, as is well known, acquired an astonishing mastery of that use of reason. In order to criticise their work and to judge it aright, we must always keep in mind that they controlled rational thought, as they understood it, with perfect firmness, and that by so doing they did full justice, at least in the first instance, even from the philosophical point of view, to the intellectual life of the time. They themselves partly managed the work of the philosophical schools; and what the professional philosophers succeeded in teaching, simply represented the standpoint adopted by them. In particular, even those philosophers had no doubt of the fact that reason has to admit that it does not fall to it to judge with regard to revealed truths.

But if we ask what this formal use of reason really means, we find that it consists in the exhaustive discussion of particular questions from the most different formal points of view.

Throughout, indeed, it is not so much the connection of the whole that claims interest, as rather the particular point of doctrine that is treated of from time to time. Now, in reference to it, as soon as the necessary definitions are given and divisions marked out, the matter is discussed according to the various formal Categories. They are chiefly the Categories of *causa* and *finis*, *materia* and *forma*, *objectum* and *subjectum*, *principium* and *terminus*, *proprietates* and *affectiones*.[1] In particular, the Category of Cause plays an important part; the enumeration of the various *causæ* recurs throughout with wearisome monotony. And the traditional doctrines *one and all*, moreover, are subjected to a formal treatment of this sort, both those of a speculative nature transcending "reason," and those of Natural Theology. Doubtless in the case of some doctrines inherited from the early Church, *e.g.* the doctrine of the Trinity and Christology, the usual Categories appear to a less extent than they do in the case of others. But that circumstance at all events is connected with the nature of the subject likewise, with the fact that the doctrines mentioned are more concerned with the description of permanent eternal relations than with the representation of such occurrences and facts as do not have their principle in themselves. It is not thereby disproved that it is the same method that governs the discussion of these articles of doctrine as well.

But in regard specially to the speculative doctrines, there results from this a peculiar inadequacy. It is not the *subject-matter* itself that is here the real object of

[1] Gass, *loc. cit.* p. 206.

thought, *i.e.* of this formal treatment, but the traditional *doctrines* which are authoritatively established. Strictly considered, however, these were themselves derived at a previous stage from an intellectual and rational acceptance of the subject proper: at the point we have reached they become matter for a new scientific treatment, *in which they now come to stand as the object of thought.* But it is not correct to regard this formal treatment as a simple continuation of the process of constructing dogma as it appears in the early Church, as something that represents the intentions of the original authors of the articles concerned, and which may therefore be conceived as a necessary advance in the development of dogma. For in that case the point is not noticed which deserves to be noticed first of all, viz. that in this later process these articles *are informed with a different scientific principle* than that to which they originally owe their existence. They came into existence in a connection of thought of much greater consequence, as speculative conceptions in which the Christian faith and the Platonic philosophy were equally concerned. Here the sums are turned into small money, as it were. The articles become judgments of the understanding like those relating to finite things and processes, only they are such as are not evident. We cannot regard that as the continuation of the original activity of thought; it is a permeation of its results with another scientific principle, one which is not opposed to it, but which is also by no means homogeneous with it. Not as if that had been something new in the orthodox Dogmatics of the evangelical Church. That process too has its roots in

Scholasticism, and begins on Western ground with the blossoming of science and the perfecting of the dialectical art in the Middle Ages. But in early Protestant Dogmatics, which adheres in this as in other things to Scholasticism, it was consistently and vigorously carried out.

Orthodox Dogmatics accordingly does not merely rest in a general way, as regards the distribution of its matter between the two principles of authority and reason, on a resolute recognition of empirical rationality as the true species of reason, but is also in its whole scientific character nothing but a complete working out of that particular embodiment of reason down to minute details, and that too in all parts of dogma alike. But in like manner in this latter product there lies a preparation for the succeeding development, in which the type of reason alluded to always presses further forward, till it has conquered the whole territory, and there is no longer any room remaining for the speculative dogmas. But again this preparation for the future history is wholly contained within the sphere of orthodox Dogmatics itself. Thus when the matter is looked at from this side also, it is found once more that the later development down to Rationalism is only the continuation of a process in which orthodox Dogmatics itself marks a stage.

Such are the *internal* causes of the development, *i.e.* those which were presented *within* the sphere of theology as such. It is understood, of course, that they could not become operative by themselves alone, and without occasion being furnished by the general conditions of mental life. Indeed, it may be asked

whether it is not to these causes, *i.e. in relation to theology, the external*, much more even than to the internal causes just mentioned, that decisive significance belongs. At all events we shall have to give at least a very brief glance at these also.

But it might be advisable to make a distinction here between the general life of the intellect and philosophical systems as such. Not as though there should be a separation of the two, or as though the close connection which everywhere exists between them, in our own period as in others, should be denied. Philosophical systems are born of the changing currents of civilised life, and they propagate that life. As they are on the one hand the expression of the general intellectual life of an epoch, *i.e.* of the intellectual interests that govern it, so on the other hand they are one of the principal instruments for securing its preservation and development. Yet notwithstanding this, we may distinguish between philosophy as it is in this way an important factor in the general life of the intellect, and philosophy as it is formed into systems of thought suited for the schools. Now this difference falls to be considered with reference to the very question here dealt with. For the influence of the general life of the intellect on the development here discussed is exceedingly great, and in so far also the same is true of the share which philosophy has in it. On the other hand, for the influence exercised by the direct interaction between Dogmatics and the philosophical systems, in the period before Kant, although it is not wanting, I cannot rate it at very much.

But wherein consists the new departure in the in-

tellectual life of the civilised nations of Europe which began in the seventeenth century, and was brought to its issue especially in the eighteenth? In that new departure, if I am right, we have to do chiefly with two things.[1] In the first place, there occurs a far-reaching change in men's governing interests. After the high-strung and one-sided tension of the religious and ecclesiastical interests in the sixteenth century, a tension which could not be permanently maintained, a reaction set in. Men's interests became chiefly worldly, passing from heaven to the world we live in. So it was above all with the interest of the intellect and with scientific pursuits. The great advance in the investigation of nature and historical life, by which modern science is distinguished above Scholastic, then took its rise. And no one who has at all realised the conception of knowledge can or will deny the extraordinary progress which is implied in that advance. It is not merely attested by the result, but we see at once from the nature of the case that it means progress when things themselves, instead of traditional opinions, are made the object of investigation. Whether, on the other hand, owing to human imperfection, there were not evil consequences connected with that progress, is a question by itself which we do not enter upon here.

The other point that falls to be considered is the opposition that was raised against the inherited institutions of social life. While these were calculated to keep every one within narrow limits, and to prevent

[1] Cf. my work, *Die Predigt des Evangeliums im modernen Geistesleben*, 1879, p. 8 ff.

one from stepping out of the fetters which were drawn firmly round him, modern *Individualism* now began to stir. There came to be entire opposition to traditional authorities. Now one of these was the authority of the Church and of Holy Scripture as a supernatural source of theological truths. Against that too, and not least against it, there was directed the opposition of a time which believed it had discovered in reason and in the conscience *of the individual*, a gracious God having endowed every one with these faculties, the source and guarantee of all truth. Thus in the general conditions of intellectual life and of the development of civilisation, there was to be found sufficient occasion for the motives of the theological development which were previously discussed coming fully into operation. The speculative dogmas were unable to resist this pressure in the long run, firmly rooted though they were, and however slowly they were parted with. But the reason why they could not maintain themselves by their own inherent power and significance, will require to be stated at length farther on.

As compared with these general conditions of intellectual life, the philosophical systems as such exerted only slight influence on the whole development. For if we leave aside Spinoza, who during his life, and generally in the period before Kant, did not produce an effect on large classes of people, all the more important philosophical systems before Hume and Kant maintained the same ground in matters of religion as that held by Mediæval Scholastic philosophy. In particular, that is true of those systems which, like the Wolffian above all, pushed their way in a very special

degree into theology. Certainly there is a great difference between the orthodox writers on Dogmatics and the theologians of the school of Wolff. In the case of the latter, reason has gained quite a different significance and much wider scope than it has in the case of the former. But yet the old reservation of a Revealed Theology which is withheld from the judgment of reason, is still maintained. And in like manner the formal means employed, in spite of all reform in principle, are still the same. If it is asked what it was that effected such a change, we find ourselves again referred to general matters, to the temperament of the age, to the great stream of intellectual development, in which, of course, this new philosophy of the schools was one of the elements. But it would have been quite a possible thing in itself to maintain the sway of dogma without interruption, with the aid of that philosophy. They are after all but slight and imperceptible transitions that connect the theological systems of this epoch with one another. The difference lies after all in the general temperament, in the spirit that governs discussion, more than in a change in the material of theology.

Bacon and Descartes are the originators of the philosophical revival, the first successful assailants of Scholasticism and fathers of modern science. The relation of their philosophy to Scholastic thought is therefore doubtless that of opposition, and it is this that strikes us at first sight, and that is chiefly present to their own consciousness. Where the traditional philosophy of the schools simply makes suppositions, they seek proof and certainty. The syllogistic method

with its endless parade of logical forms is set aside. And so one could mention a great deal, and that too of a substantial character, in which a transformation takes place. But what has to be said of the relation that obtains here is not the whole after all. It is at the same time true that what these men inaugurate must equally be described as an important and far-reaching *reform of traditional philosophy*, by which it is rescued from deterioration, and brought back to the genuine sources of scientific knowledge.

For what are the leading ideas of this new philosophy? In the first place, we have the stress that is laid on experience, and the bent towards the real, that which can be discovered only in and through experience. By putting this principle in the forefront, and devising a method that harmonised with it, Bacon showed modern science the way to its great successes, and gave it that bent which it has become a thing impossible for it to-day to abandon. Side by side with this there stands as the other point of departure the ideal Rationalism of Descartes, which, owing to the study of Mathematics and the application of it to Natural Philosophy, also furnished a substantial contribution to the revival of strict scientific investigation, this being the point in which the impulses which proceeded from him and from Bacon respectively meet and supplement each other. Those like Spinoza, who revived a type of speculation which was fettered by religious conditions, or even those like Jacob Bœhme, who lost themselves in Theosophical and Gnostic trains of thought, remained at first solitary strangers in the province of the new philosophy. The main stream of the development

went past and beyond them, along the paths of Rationalism and Empiricism.

Now we called that method of explaining the world which formed the basis of the Natural Theology of dogma, and which in contradistinction to all speculation in later Scholasticism was accounted rational in the strict sense, the rationalistic and empirical method. It consists in this, that the methods which are successful in special departments, the instruments of reason which the common rational man and empirical science employ with success, are called into requisition for the explanation of the world as a whole. And that, it must be allowed, is the basis of Scholasticism also; only from its character as a secondary system of thought it does not philosophise in regard to things themselves, but deals with the traditional opinions of the schools, and in connection with these logical hair-splitting grows to inordinate excess. But if this is borne in mind, it becomes plain that the new philosophy may also be conceived as an important reform of the traditional philosophy, as a revivifying of it from its own roots, and that that is the other side of the relation which appears here. The principal thing which it has in common with tradition is this, that it by no means restricts itself to the finite world, but knows of a *Theology*, and connects its ideas with the idea of God. In consistency with this positive attitude which it assumes towards the past, it also gave up at a later date its original polemic against the old-world ideals of Scholasticism: Leibnitz expressly and consciously sought attachment with Plato and Aristotle again.

If, therefore, we ask how this philosophy must have

acted on Dogmatics, we find that the means were supplied by it for giving new shape to *theologia naturalis*, and placing it in relation to the mechanism of living science. But there was nothing in that that could give rise to a real revival of theology, a transference of it to a new basis. The main thing continues to be the general fact, that the rational explanation of the world which starts with experience appears more than ever to be the kind which is in strict conformity with reason, that gradually and imperceptibly the centre of gravity is transferred to this rational theology which draws from the newly-opened sources of living science, that finally the taste of the age nauseated the studies of traditional theology characterised as they were by formalism. I can discover only an indirect influence of Protestantism on this whole movement (cf. on this point p. 253), and nothing on the other hand that would have to be described as a direct effect of the genuine and leading principles of the Reformation. We have to do with a revival on that ground which is common to Catholicism and Protestantism, and which as respects its theological form is derived from the tradition of the former. Descartes himself, who influenced theology much more than Bacon, was, we must observe, a Catholic. And the leaders of the philosophical movement in Germany have occasionally been charged with Catholicising tendencies, a charge which, although erroneous, does also contain a grain of truth, and is not such a complete fabrication as at first sight it may seem. Down to the present day, it may be observed that where there is an express preference for the traditional philosophical study of theology,

there is found in connection with it a valuation of dogma which sets a higher estimate on what is common to Catholics and Protestants, than on the characteristic ideas of the Reformation and the foundation they have in Scripture.

But to all this it may be objected, that the reign of Rationalism in theology and the Church is after all the direct consequence of the *Aufklärung*, and that this involves something that contradicts in more ways than one the view which has just been set forth. It has to be said, first, that the *Aufklärung* is something new, and stands in no positive connection with the ideas of the traditional system of religion. For otherwise how could it occasionally have led even to the denial of God, to theoretical and practical Materialism? But then, secondly, we seem to have here what has now been denied, viz. a definite system of thought, which pushed its way into theology from without, exercising a transforming influence upon the latter.

Yet there could scarcely be anything that serves so much as the connection between the *Aufklärung* and ecclesiastical Rationalism, to confirm and throw light upon the connection here maintained. For in the first place, as regards the latter question, we cannot really look upon the *Aufklärung* as a definite philosophical system. It appeared in different forms in separate countries; and if we take the elastic notion in its wide sense, we can and must reckon thinkers of the most different schools as being among the originators and representatives of the *Aufklärung*. The difference between the English Deists and French Materialists, and between these again and the German philosophers

of the *Aufklärung*, must be admitted to be very great. What connects them all again with one another is only their general tendencies, especially their opposition to any supernatural authority for thought. It is precisely the *Aufklärung* that represents the temperament of the time, the overthrow of mental life with its culture, *i.e.*, in other words, what has already been repeatedly described as having been the one factor of the whole development, lying outside theology yet of the first importance. The fact that contemporaneously with the flow of this current of the *Aufklärung* into theology and the Church Rationalism gained sovereign power, signifies nothing else than that the process reached its consummation as soon as the general tendencies spoken of gained sufficient strength to be able to triumph even in the Church.

But as to the connection between the ideas of the traditional system of religion and the *Aufklärung*, it is doubtless correct that the French *Aufklärung* in part took up an attitude of pure negation towards Church and religion in every form. However, there are only isolated voices there, and from the nature of the case they were of no significance for the development of theology. On the other hand, it may quite well be asserted that the religious ideas by which the *Aufklärung* lived were derived from the traditional system, that by the latter alone, indeed, its point of departure and its mainstay are supplied. For *the view of man which takes him apart from history and provides him, thus isolated, with reason, conscience, and religious ideas*, possesses that significance for the *Aufklärung*. Or it is described more precisely as the

view which makes the centre of gravity of all that is of value in human life lie, as in the case of a mere natural product, in man's natural equipment, and not in the historical development of the individual within the borders of the community. The men of the *Aufklärung* were not in a position to form a different view; whoever entertained misgivings, and they were not unwarranted, with reference to the one just mentioned, assumed an attitude of scepticism towards the whole subject; and whoever was convinced of its incorrectness became an Atheist and a Materialist. But where is the origin of this view to be found in history? Undoubtedly in the ecclesiastical dogma of the original perfection of man. For in truth experience teaches nothing of the sort. Holy Scripture has just as little to say on that matter. But dogma, *which, owing to the Logos idea, transfers the centre of gravity from Revelation to the Creation* (p. 97), does teach something of the kind. It is true, of course, at the same time that there is also a great difference. Dogma teaches that that gorgeous equipment was lost through sin to man as he is known in experience, and that it is Christ who first assists him to recover it, though it is not restored in all its worth. But though there is this difference, we ought not to forget the positive connection which is found here. We require to eliminate from the system of dogma only the idea of sin, or the essential significance it there possesses, and then the decisive significance of the appearance of Christ also falls away. And what there is then remaining forms the ideas of the *Aufklärung*. Thus the position is that the positive ideas of the *Aufklärung*

are an inheritance from the past. What the representatives of the new period turn against the speculative dogmas of the Church is itself an element of dogma, and one too which is not derived from the Christian religion, at least not in the sense here assigned to it.

In connection with this, we have the fact that the *Aufklärung* was unable to appreciate the significance of history for the mental and especially the religious life of men. In a certain way that peculiarity is also an inheritance from the past. The Logos speculation, which forms the philosophical groundwork of dogma, assumes an attitude of indifference towards history, or knows it only as the natural development of what was given from the first. It is different with dogma so far as it is really an expression of the Christian religion. But the significance which dogma assigns to history is wholly connected with the crisis of the Fall, which has as its counterpart the new crisis of the Incarnation of God (p. 109). Now it is just this that the *Aufklärung* denies. With that the significance of history also falls away; and what keeps its ground is the intuitional conception which is indifferent to history, and which also forms the unexpressed presupposition of dogma. It is therefore doubtless an opposition that we find here, but an opposition again within the framework of a common fundamental conception.

And so it might be shown with sufficient clearness, that there is in reality a positive connection between the religious *Aufklärung* and traditional dogma. Nothing serves so well as that fact to show that the

way for the whole development was prepared by all that went before, and that not merely, as has just been proved, in a formal manner, but also in the material sense. No doubt the impulse leading to the issue must have been imparted from without. But when that was supplied, and when in the end it was supplied with the requisite force, the development was accomplished as the direct continuation of a process, the beginnings of which lie in Scholasticism, and in which the orthodox Dogmatics of Protestantism itself represents a stage. And in this way theological Rationalism was developed from that form of Dogmatics.

This same development, in which Rationalism resulted from orthodox Dogmatics, we have to look at from yet another point of view. For every one who is convinced of the truth of the Christian faith, it involves a problem which must not be passed over here. I mean *the question why the failing and ultimately vanquished dogmas did not, in spite of all the changes and vicissitudes in the mental life of the time, succeed in asserting themselves by their own inherent worth, by their significance for Christian piety.*

Here, however, we have first of all to establish the fact that in their own way the speculative dogmas give expression to the *central truths* of the Christian religion. We describe them as speculative, and distinguish them from the rational, when we look at their scientific form, the philosophical movement which had a share in the origin of them. At the same time we say it is these that are principally

associated with the *special characteristics of Christianity*, so that if they are destroyed those characteristics too can no longer be maintained on the ground and with the weapons of dogma. Doubtless the truths to which the *Aufklärung* and Rationalism still cleaved ought not to be underestimated in respect to their value for Christianity. Faith in a personal God and in the sway of His Providence in Creation, and adherence to the moral duties of man in the world, and to the truth that he is destined for eternal life—this is not less essential to Christianity than what had here been thrown over. Yet even these truths have their real foundation taken away with the destruction of the others, since the latter event involves the destruction of the faith in Revelation. The above-mentioned problem therefore remains the same after all.

And it cannot be pushed aside by pointing to an opposition between the new ideas which were arising, and Christianity, and explaining that the triumph of the former must have had as its consequence the fall of the latter. Such an essential opposition does not occur at all. If man's interest is directed to the world and what actually happens in the world, we must ask whether that is not at the same time a consequence of Protestantism, which ascribes to life in the world, and to the duties of one's secular vocation, an altogether different value, as bearing on the realisation of Christian perfection, from what Catholicism does.[1] The difference in the attention given to

[1] In this consists the indirect influence mentioned at p. 247 which was exercised by the Reformation on the development described above.

the common duties of one's vocation, and in the success achieved in them, which is often found where Catholics and Protestants live side by side under the same conditions, might be taken as evidence of this. And with reference to the assertion of the personal independence of the individual and of the equal worth of all men, that is simply a Christian idea, one which Protestantism, it is true, insists on more strongly than was done before, but by no means introduced for the first time into history. Undoubtedly the *Aufklärung* worked out these ideas with an abstract one-sidedness. We get at the truth only if we reflect at the same time *that it is only in history that the individual becomes a person.* However, it cannot be denied that here a long-neglected portion of *Christian truth* was taken account of, and it now received its rights more thoroughly than before. It does not therefore do to seek the explanation in the *one* factor of the movement, viz. in the new ideas which were arising and in them alone. These could have exercised no such influence on the continuance of the Christian religion, if on the side of religion and the Church everything had been in order. Here again we have to look for one main cause of the evil results in the condition of things religious and ecclesiastical.

But if we reflect on the matter, we are first of all confronted by the often-mentioned fact that dogma arose in connection with Catholicism, whereas the position and significance of dogma are quite different in the Catholic Church from what they are on Evangelical Protestant ground.

Dogma arose within the sphere of Catholicism, and

here it fills its position in the manner intended (p. 152). In its finer finish and consistent development, it is really only of some concern to the theologian; and at the same time he has his limits prescribed by the officials of the Church, who are clothed with supernatural authority; while a task is imposed by his position relatively to practical church life, the discharge of which can compensate him for any intellectual satisfaction that may be wanting. In the case of *the laity*, the rational constituents of faith suffice for the common requirements of the intellect. The other portions have to be added as being the really valuable element; but they prove themselves to be such not for the intellect, but, through the medium of worship, for the feelings. *Dogma is here the object to which piety is directed, not the expression of personal, conscious, acknowledged faith.* And a slight acquaintance with it really suffices for the laity, if they only believe and mean to believe what the Church believes. And this idea of a *fides implicita* on the part of the laity is quite well founded; there is a high degree of wisdom implied in it, *if* Christian truth really coincides with the traditional system of dogma maintained by the Church. *Subject to that condition*, it is, strictly speaking, a necessary supplement demanded by the nature of the case. For we must also recollect that the speculative dogmas in particular did not by any means appear originally, in the first tentative efforts made in connection with them, as something that would be available for every one, but as a matter for the initiated, to whom it is given to advance from πίστις to γνῶσις.

But now dogma or doctrine has quite a different significance in the Protestant system, in connection with the Evangelical faith and life.

Here the *Word of God* comes to occupy the decisive position, that on which all else depends. And whatever we think of the connection between the Word of God (Holy Scripture) and the prevailing doctrine, that means at all events nothing but this, that *doctrine* itself obtains an all-determining significance in the Protestant system. For if Holy Scripture is regarded as the direct source of theological doctrines, then for the practical purposes of the Church the Word of God is given in the doctrines which have that origin. On the other hand, if it is known that the Word of God must be appropriated by faith, and that therefore the confession of faith is the really adequate form of Christian truth, that confession itself, being arrived at with care and set forth with precision, becomes a well-defined doctrine of God, of His relation to the world and His Revelation among men, with all else that follows from that. Even in this latter case, therefore, so long as the possession of positive revealed truth is not relinquished, *i.e.* so long as Christianity is not relinquished, it is still inevitably *doctrine* that all depends on here. It completes worship and supplants the Confessional. For the preaching of the Word of God, which is inseparable from doctrine, becomes the main feature of worship ; and in the dispensation of the Sacraments also, stress is laid on the promise connected with them which faith has to accept, on the doctrine which unfolds the sense and significance of the holy acts, and

allows of a conscious personal acceptance of the blessing they convey. But the administration of discipline, which is associated among Catholics with the use of the Confessional, is handed over by Protestantism, so far as direct action is involved in it, to the *status politicus* or to the *status œconomicus* as the case may be, in the community as leavened by Christian morality. At least the old Protestant Church discipline had no duration, and there are only meagre remains of it surviving. What the Church has reserved for itself in this regard is the influence which is produced on its members by teaching and warning, as it is attained by the instruction of youth, by preaching and the care of souls. Here, again, therefore, it is doctrine that proves to be the principal thing in the Protestant system.

It cannot and ought not to be otherwise on Protestant ground. For the object is to mould and regulate faith and life, or, in a word, the whole piety of Christians, by the rule of divine Revelation. *But for that purpose there are no other means than the Word, than doctrine.* Or, if it is held in opposition to this, that divine Revelation should be realised and made operative in institutions and social arrangements as well, it must be replied that on Protestant principles the care of these devolves in part on other moral authorities than the ecclesiastical, which authorities are just as little profane in the community pervaded by Christian morality as the authority of the Church known to us in experience, an authority which is itself administered through men. But those institutions and arrangements which are subject to the

latter and form its constituent parts, are just such as have doctrine for their determinative feature. The *question of doctrine* is therefore the most important matter for every communion of the Evangelical Church. The zeal in behalf of *pure doctrine* is here not simply something natural, but something justifiable and necessary. For if doctrine has such significance here as has been stated, all depends again on whether the doctrine in vogue, the doctrine by means of which the offices of the Church nourish piety, really harmonises at the same time with the Word of God or divine Revelation, *i.e.* on whether it is pure doctrine. At this day especially it is needful to insist on this, when almost everywhere there is an inclination to regard the zeal of the old Protestants for pure doctrine as something misplaced or at least overdone. The errors therewith associated rather had their origin only in the nature of the doctrinal system in vogue at the time and its one-sided reference to the intellect; whereas there is nothing whatever to object to the great stress laid on pure doctrine in itself. That disparaging estimate of it is to be traced back to the widespread mistake of seeking the error in the form, which the nature of the case after all requires, in the principle, which after all governs the system of necessity, instead of seeking it in the *particular mode* in which the form is filled up or the principle takes definite shape, in the case which invites disparagement. So the stress laid on the principle of authority is held to be a Catholic error. And yet in the religion of Revelation that principle is a necessary one; it is only the application it receives in Catholicism that is

erroneous. And so it is here. Owing to the erroneous treatment of the matter in the orthodox period, people have been accustomed to hold the maintenance of pure doctrine, the zeal in behalf of it, to be an error. And yet it is something that has its roots deep in the nature of Protestantism.

The alteration in the position of doctrine in the Protestant system is especially brought out too, by the fact that here the idea of a *fides implicita* is rejected. Protestantism does not know the difference in principle between clergy and laity, on which that idea again rests. There is no substitution either of priest or Church for the individual. What is taught therefore in the Church as necessary for salvation—*and anything else ought not to be taught in the Church at all*—must be open to the full personal acceptance of every member of the Church. Here there is not a chink, however fine, in which the idea we speak of could find a lodgment. Revelation and faith entirely correspond to each other, and ought to correspond. True faith means revelation accepted; and that only is revelation which personal faith ought to accept, and which therefore it can accept. To say it is not necessary that the simple Christian should become acquainted with the whole body of Christian truth, is to teach that a mutilated faith would be sufficient. But if it is asked if the mercy of God is not so great as to overlook a defect of the kind supposed, a consideration is introduced that has nothing at all to do with the matter. The question is not what is possible with God, but how the institutions of the Church should be shaped so as to fulfil their purpose. And

no one will mean to affirm that in this question a consideration comes in that opens a prospect into infinity. There can be no doubt of this, that the idea of a *fides implicita* has not been set aside on Protestant ground by a mere accident, but that it must for ever continue to be rejected.

But if now doctrine has this very great significance in the ecclesiastical system of Protestantism, the question naturally presses itself on our attention, *whether the dogma which arose in the first instance in connection with Catholicism was also adapted to fill the position thus assigned to it here.*

To get an answer to that question, we must not direct our view to the period of the Reformation or the beginnings of Protestant Dogmatics. What filled men's minds in those times, and stood foremost in general interest, was not, properly speaking, traditional dogma, but the doctrine of salvation, as revived by the Reformation, in its immediate connection with Christ. Everything was regarded from that point of view and grasped as from that position. Traditional dogma was therefore not given up. It formed from the first the background, which was allowed to remain as a matter of course. Everywhere, too, there were connected with it the conclusions proper to the Reformation. Only we cannot affirm that in all its parts alike it dominated preaching and gave its impress to what was taught. And therefore in the first instance it was not traditional dogma as such that filled that place in the Protestant system which is held by doctrine and which has just been described: it was the new doctrines which the Reformation had

brought forth from the treasure-house of the divine Word.

But now matters did not rest there, and we shall have to conclude that there in the long run they could not rest. Different causes must have had the effect of making the doctrines of the Reformation gradually *fall back into the main body of the system, and thereby retire from the leading position.* In the first place, there were practical motives of the religious judgment itself. For if all those doctrines are derived from divine Revelation, have not even all of them, although in different degrees, worth and significance for practical piety? At least such important doctrines as those of Christ's Person and Work, which were simply preserved in the traditional form, must have asserted themselves alongside of the doctrine of Salvation as being of equal significance. Hutter in his Compendium already separates between the doctrine of Salvation and Christology.[1] The latter, too, as the doctrine of the two Natures of Christ, had really acquired independent significance before in Protestant Dogmatics. At a later time Calov expressly declares Justification and the Divinity of Christ to be the *two* fundamental articles of the Lutheran Confession;[2] and he does so, of course, in a way which shows that he understands the Divinity of the Lord not in the sense of Scripture, but in the sense of traditional dogma. He therefore goes on to include both articles in the idea of the full satisfaction rendered by Christ the God-man for the sin of the whole world. But in

[1] Gass, *Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik*, i. p. 254.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 335.

this endeavour to draw the articles into a unity there appears next the other cause, which must no less have contributed to make the special doctrines of the Reformation fall back into the main body of the system. This is that impulse of the knowing mind which makes it bring facts of knowledge of the same sort into connection with one another, *the impulse which leads to system.* And so it came about quite gradually without any hiatus in the development that the Reformation doctrines came to stand as special, positively defined, renovations and improvements in the main body of the traditional system of dogma.

The change thus effected appears most plainly in the gradual consolidation of the body of doctrine relating to the *ordo salutis*, in connection with which Justification and Faith now find a place for themselves. At first Justification and Faith are everything. The related articles of doctrine, such as Repentance, Conversion, Good Works, stand *alongside of these*, and in them too the new principle is carried out and enforced. The Reformation doctrine maintains its fundamental significance. Instead of that, Justification becomes at a later time a factor in the process in which a sinner becomes a righteous person on the ground of what was done by Christ, and the doctrine of Justification now forms a part in the description of that process. In this way the change was accomplished in the case of this special and yet very important point: the traditional system of doctrine again attained supremacy; the doctrines of the Reformation stand out in it as renovations, without greatly impressing the original supporters of the system, *i.e.* the

Catholic theologians, or seriously troubling them. For though, under the title of *justificatio*, something else than what they meant is dealt with, yet the whole process of salvation is conceived again in the framework of the Catholic doctrine of Justification, viz. as a process of reciprocal action between God and men, the presupposition of which is Christ. Here there is only one alternative. Either dogma as a whole is transformed by starting from the Reformation doctrine of Salvation as a centre; or if the old dogma is the end of the matter, the process of developing in its full extent the newly-won knowledge of salvation, in the connection there presented, is attended with the greatest difficulties, indeed with such as are insuperable. There is no doubt that the old teachers attempted the latter course, and accomplished their object as far as was possible. But it seems to me there is also no doubt of this, that this article of Protestant Dogmatics is landed in an untenable position, and that it was partly due to its being in that position that the Reformation doctrine of Salvation had to yield in the age of the *Aufklärung* and Rationalism to a shallow Pelagian doctrine.

However, that is a special point which we cannot go farther into here. Here it is the general truth that is of importance, the gradual withdrawal of the Reformation doctrine of Salvation into the main body of the traditional system. For in connection with this there now comes the particular question, whether dogma was able to fill the place in the system of Protestantism which was thus assigned to it, whether it was adapted to serve as the principal ecclesiastical means for foster-

ing piety, that being now the real function of doctrine on Protestant ground.

As its whole form shows, dogma appeals *to the intellect*, to the understanding of man. And that fact, moreover, stands in very close connection with the leading idea of the dogmatic system, according to which the knowledge of God is our chief good. It is true it does not necessarily follow from that idea; and it is not the only possibility that there is as regards the application and acceptance of dogma. But it is that possibility which was first realised in the orthodox period, which therefore must also undoubtedly have been the one first suggested. And we understand perfectly how that was the case, in view of the examination we have just made of the state of things in Protestantism. Here there is no difference in principle between clergy and laity. Pure doctrine must become the possession of all; preaching and instruction assume a theological character. True, there is an attempt made to soften the principle, by setting up a graduated scheme of the *articuli fidei*, distinguishing the less important, the knowledge of which is not necessary, from the really important, which every one must know. However, there is not much gained in that way. As nothing else was possible with the fundamental conception that prevailed, it became a duty for the laity, in spite of this graduated scheme, to know all the main portions of Dogmatics. And as much of this matter necessarily remained external to them, leading to a mere knowledge of the understanding, and was such that it could not be personally accepted by faith, the conscientious Christian par-

ticularly was moved by a real anxiety as to whether he actually possessed the necessary knowledge and was avoiding all errors.[1] For the rest, the fact that the practice of Evangelical Christianity was not confined even during the orthodox period to this mere profession of orthodoxy, is proved by the Evangelical Church Hymn and by the ascetic literature. But the other element is what preponderates and gives its impress to the official cultivation of piety at the time in question.

It must now be further observed as a matter of the first importance, that in this connection the position of the speculative dogmas must have become specially disadvantageous. They too appeal to the intellect; under the formal treatment of Scholasticism and of orthodox Dogmatics, they became judgments of the understanding of a particular kind. What dignifies them is this, that they came to be known by divine Revelation, and could not have become known otherwise. But to this is due at the same time the fact that they are *destitute of evidence*, that a constant *effort of will* is necessary to overcome the natural doubts which are raised against them. While, therefore, the rational portions of dogma can be accepted by every one with the understanding, and have for a long time had good support from the reason that has been in power, it is the peculiar characteristic of the speculative portions to be opposed to reason, on the recognition of which, though it may be a qualified recognition, the dogmatic system itself is based.

[1] Cf. Tholuck, *Das kirchliche Leben des 17ten Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1861, i. p. 57.

But in this there is a twofold contradiction involved. Whoever abstracts from the historical connections and conceives the proposition by itself that it belongs to the characteristic features of *Revealed* truths that they are *destitute of evidence*, must find the contradiction involved here forcibly striking him. For what can be the reason why anything has been Revealed except that it should simply *be* a Revelation, and that must mean that it should be clear and well known? Doubtless it occurs to one, by way of justification for the assertion alluded to, to recall the fact that it is a Revelation of God we have to do with, and that God's nature is exalted above man's power of conception, and that therefore there will be involved in divine Revelation something that surpasses men's power of knowledge. And the truth on which one falls back in saying this ought not to be denied, nor yet the fact that it had a share in the historical origin of the above-mentioned assertion. Yet a sufficient justification of it is not supplied in that way. The affirmation really goes far beyond the statement that in Revealed truths a residuum of mystery continues to be found. It is affirmed, indeed, and declared to be quite a general characteristic of them, that it belongs to their nature as a whole to be destitute of evidence, and to stand in opposition to the reason of man even after it has become enlightened. But in that case, if this justification should hold good, the doctrine of the so-called metaphysical perfections of God would also and above all have to be reckoned among those that remain destitute of evidence. Instead of that, it is counted among the doctrines of *theologia naturalis;* which is surely proof

enough that here we have to do with something quite different from a position that could be justified by an appeal to the limits of our knowledge.

The other contradiction, again, is that this doctrine emphatically appeals to the understanding, that in the acceptance of it stress is avowedly laid on acceptance by the intellect, and now the very doctrines that are held again to be the most significant and important are after all opposed to the understanding. That as well as what has just been considered is an incongruity, which, taken simply by itself, would not and could not possibly be understood. It becomes intelligible only if we keep in view the whole historical connection in which such strange affirmations were hazarded.

But if that is done, there might be discovered at the same time, in the position of things now pointed out, the reason why the speculative dogmas could not be maintained by their worth and significance for Christian piety. Formed on Catholic ground, they were not calculated to fill the position assigned them in the Protestant system, to discharge the task here imposed on them. It is not, properly speaking, the cause of their destruction that we have to recognise in this fact. That lies in the circumstances previously set forth, above all in the new currents of general intellectual life and the reciprocal action between them and Dogmatics. But in the fact alluded to there is certainly to be found the reason why the speculative dogmas could not in such circumstances be preserved from destruction by any firm support they had from Christian piety and personal faith. For what sort of support is it which is derived from the position that

statements which are opposed to the understanding have to be accepted by the understanding? That situation requires very strong defence itself from other quarters before it can be maintained. We cannot for a moment suppose that it could have put a check on its part to the process of dissolution and destruction.

However, although dogma appealed above all to the intellect, and the Church's cultivation of piety derived its character in the first instance from that circumstance, whence mere Orthodoxy next arose, that after all is not the only possibility. It is undeniable that dogma, and especially the speculative elements of it, can be presented for one's acceptance in another way still. For these articles were originally formed in a connection in which doubtless the theoretical, philosophical factor has an independent significance, but which, we must observe, includes the practical, religious element as well. And this remark is no idle speculation as to all sorts of possibilities, but is suggested by the course of history itself. When the evils of the one-sided accentuation of the intellect in the orthodox period appeared, the attempt was made on the ground of Evangelical Protestantism to correct the error, to make dogma disposable in another way for piety, an attempt the after-effects of which continue down to the present. For it is simply this that is the meaning of Pietism, a system which at this point again cannot be passed by.

Pietism aimed at being a continuation and completion of the Reformation; and a relative, historical right cannot be denied to the claim thereby put forward. Between the renovation of religion purposed by

the Reformation and the actual conditions in their general complexion as formed under the influence of Orthodoxy, there is manifestly a contrast. That Justification before God does not depend on works but on the grace of God which is laid hold of by faith, and that it is not by special works of piety but by the fulfilment of his daily duties that the Christian serves God in the way that is well pleasing to Him—these were the two fundamental ideas of the Reformation, themselves closely connected again with each other, with which the revolution in the traditional Church system had started. But what had become of them now? To begin with the latter, *correctness of belief had become as such the principal duty* of the Christian. As soon, however, as the duty of belief is isolated from that organic connection with piety which makes the renewal of the inward man as completed by faith appear the essential part of that duty; as soon as theoretical assent to definite propositions and forms is emphasized as the essential thing in faith; just so soon does correctness of belief come into line with telling one's beads, pilgrimages, and other works of that kind. To this, however, things had come in the orthodox period, partly because the Biblical notion of faith, which the Reformation aimed at renewing, is not at all compatible with the presentation of the content of faith in dogma (p. 119), partly because the one-sided accentuation of the intellectual element in faith had at that time gained predominance. It is also well known that in connection with this there came a looseness of morals, or at least that this condition of things, religious and ecclesiastical, could not counteract that evil. It

cannot therefore be denied that in this respect the intention of the Reformation was not realised by the condition of things then existing. And now so closely are the two above-mentioned ideas connected, that justification by faith is also incompatible with the result stated. For if it signifies that for man's salvation all depends on the grace of God, and faith is regarded only as the means of accepting that grace, orthodox Dogmatics has, it is true, adhered to that in principle; but as a fact the position came to be that faith, *i.e.* correctness of belief, appeared as the contribution of man, on which God makes the bestowal of His grace dependent. It is therefore conceivable how the state of things which had been gradually produced in the Evangelical Church evoked the idea of a continuation and completion of the Reformation as a necessity.

In this way Pietism arose. We have specially to observe that the tendency it exhibited was not to make over Christian truth, *i.e.* doctrine, to the intellect mainly, and not to ascribe the principal importance to correct acceptance by the understanding, but to make the truth living and operative for the life, for inward piety. But the doctrine that was thought of and employed was the traditional system of dogma. Pietism attempted no improvement in doctrine, nor did it understand its purposed completion of the Reformation in the sense that it required to go back to the motives that lay behind that improvement in doctrine which sprang from the Reformation, in order to give them full effect. Rather was the condition of things which had been gradually brought about in the

sphere of Dogmatics simply accepted by it, and an attempt was made to make *this* doctrine available for living personal piety. The Pietistic theology in general entered deeply only into the doctrine of salvation; but it was just in the case of the doctrine of salvation, as was shown above, that a return to the traditional forms had taken place; and to these, not the fundamental ideas of the Reformation at all, did the theory as well as the practice of Pietism adhere.

If, now, it is correct that just as traditional dogma, taken as a whole, and so far as regards its leading ideas, arose in connection with Catholicism, it also permanently represents the Catholic form of piety, we shall have to surmise antecedently that Pietism also gives practical evidence of this. And this is really the case, as Ritschl has recently shown with convincing effect in his *History of Pietism*. And it seems to me that in view of the connection which has been explained here, we can speak of this result as being in a certain sense necessary. Into the particular traits in which this issue appears we must not enter further here.[1] I wish only to recall the fact that we have an affinity with Catholic forms of piety such as rest on an opposition to Catholicism which has not itself broken away from the Catholic ground. But at the same time the observation of this relationship by no means obliges us to deny the Evangelical character of the individual representatives of Pietism. It is rather understood as a matter of course that the Evangelical institutions under which they were educated and passed their lives

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 393 ff. Cf. note to p. 61 in this book.

proved their value in their case also. Nevertheless an affinity of the kind mentioned occurs, one which appears more or less clearly in individual instances.

Here it falls to be considered that Pietism on its part too, as history testifies, was not able to arrest the dissolution and destruction of the speculative dogmas in Protestantism. We shall not be surprised at that. Catholicism is able to mould and govern the Christian life of the common people. What qualifies it to do so is, however, its ecclesiastical institutions, and therefore just what is wanting to Pietism, what it opposes in Catholicism still more avowedly than the Reformation did. So too we cannot doubt that the Protestant ideals are fitted to take a wide sweep and to permeate and guide the life of the nations. But the corrective for Orthodoxy which Pietism attempts to supply is, in spite of its opposite intention, further removed from the principles of the Reformation than Orthodoxy itself was. Pietistic religion is only calculated to act on smaller circles such as are comparable on Evangelical ground, say, to the unions of the Catholic monastic orders. Hence the Pietistic movement was unable on its part also to give dogma that support from personal piety which it urgently required for its maintenance.

Indeed, Pietism was not merely unable to arrest the breaking up of dogma, but itself became a factor in that process of destruction; and that is the other aspect of the position it assumes here. But the fact that such is the case is due to this, that by no mere accident, but in virtue of its whole character, Pietism transfers the centre of gravity from the truth which is objectively given to the subject who accepts it, that it

is in this sense Subjectivism. Of course the question can be raised next whether that is not a necessity, as soon as the error of Orthodoxy is avoided, and importance is attributed to a living, personal acceptance of religion; whether, therefore, Pietism deserves to be disparaged on that ground. In fact it is difficult to say, so long as *dogma* is accounted the suitable form of Christian truth, how it will be possible to escape the dilemma, that either the authority of Christian truth is compromised in favour of the subject, or the strong emphasis laid on that authority makes it impossible for a living participation on the part of the individual to enter into the case. The only way of escape there is here, viz. by shaping doctrine in all its parts in such a manner *that it becomes intelligible at the same time as a law for our inner life*, this way of escape Pietism did not know and could not know. However, we have not to do with this general question here, nor yet with praise or blame as attaching to the phenomena of history, but with the comprehension of their interconnection. Here now the position is simply this, that Pietism, owing to its character of Subjectivism, unintentionally helped forward the destruction of dogma.

In this lies its affinity with the tendencies of the *Aufklärung*. As happens elsewhere so is it here: fanatical and rationalistic Subjectivism meet, although at first sight they seem to stand very far apart from one another. Who, *e.g.*, will fix the exact point where fanaticism ceased among many of the Independent supporters of Cromwell and rationalism began? Who will consider it an accident that in Germany too, in

the period here treated of, figures like Dippel and Edelmann arose, of whom it is hard to say whether they were more Pietists or adherents of the *Aufklärung?* The particular article of theology may even be mentioned in which they both agree with the traditional doctrine, and therefore too with one another. That is the doctrine of the communication of God's image at the Creation, expressed in its traditional form. That that was the positive, basal idea of the *Aufklärung*, although it was worked out by it in quite a different way from what was shown in the doctrinal system of the Church, we have previously seen. But even in his time Löscher objected with justice to the Pietists, that they pushed the notion of the Divine image too far, and therefore both overestimated the natural man, and in the case of the pious person attributed the principal importance to his subjectivity, by calling what was really derived from that source the Spirit of God.

Thus the speculative dogmas, from their nature as conditioned by their origin, were not calculated to assert themselves in the period of the *Aufklärung* by their own inherent power. It is not meant, to repeat the point once more in conclusion, that in this peculiarity of their nature the cause of their destruction should be sought. But certainly in this is found the solution of the problem we started with, the question, viz., why this doom befell them in spite of their inherent significance.

A peculiar and prominent position is assumed now, in connection with the succeeding development, by the

Critical Philosophy of Kant. That is the natural consequence of its importance in philosophy and man's mental life in general. Kant himself says in the closing observations of his *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*, "God, Freedom, and Immortality are the problems to the solution of which all the preparatory labours of Metaphysics are directed as their ultimate and sole purpose." In fact, those truths with which the religious interest is bound up are at the same time those with which philosophy, as history exhibits it, has always mainly concerned itself—and there doubtless the matter will rest in the future as well. Thus one who acted with such incisive effect as Kant did on the fortunes of Metaphysics in after times, must also for that very reason have influenced Theology. In addition to this, the truths of religion and morality, as being those of chief distinction, lay specially near his heart; and the interest he had in securing and defending them came more and more to be what principally weighed with him in his Critical undertaking. And therefore, as a rule, he prosecutes his study of principles till he is led to the discussion of those truths.

The effect produced by him was, however, in the first instance a negative one. He destroyed the foundation on which dogma rests, and which at the same time supports the *Aufklärung*. I mean the foundation that took definite shape especially in the *Proofs for the Existence of God*. More generally considered, it is the extension of the theoretical use of reason beyond the limits of sense experience, and that supplied by history, or man's confidence in the power

of reason as an *independent* source of knowledge alongside of or above experience.

Dogma rests on that presupposition. It was originated through the content of the Christian faith being subjected to a treatment and presented in a form that were regulated by that use of reason. That is no less the basis of the system of dogma, savouring of the schools, which we have in orthodox Dogmatics. For it rests on that presupposition in offering its proof for the faith which is founded on authority, for the rule of knowledge furnished by divine Revelation. And, looked at from this point of view, even the newer philosophy, if we judge from its chief representatives, was nothing but a continuation of the ancient and mediæval style of teaching. Descartes not merely approves of the Ontological argument for the existence of God, but improves it, and in this improved form assigns it a very important place in the doctrine of philosophy. Bacon and Locke, Leibnitz and Wolff, great as the differences between them are in other respects, agree in this, that they conclude each in his own way from the existence of the world to the existence of God, *i.e.* the principle of the Cosmological argument and of the other proofs which are built upon it holds good in their view. And it is understood as a matter of course, that here too the *Aufklärung*, so far as it stood by religion, followed its masters.

Indeed, it is not enough to say that the *Aufklärung* did not renounce this basis on which dogma had stood. It must rather be asserted that for that movement the old basis gained a much higher value than it had ever possessed before. For orthodox Dogmatics all the

matter here alluded to was really only the presupposition and introduction. To the proofs for the existence of God it devoted no special attention; its interest was immediately directed to Revelation. These discussions, in particular, had no significance in the orthodox period for religious faith. But in proportion as the centre of gravity was transferred from *theologia revelata* to *theologia naturalis*, a change in this matter set in. What till this time was but the presupposition and introduction, now became a *source* of knowledge; in the first instance, a source side by side with Revelation, but finally the only source that still obtained recognition as such. From it was derived rational faith. The pious person who adhered to the *Aufklärung* drew edification from the theme of the Physico-Theological Argument.

And now the position of Kant is this: he destroyed this foundation to which men of all types had held fast till then, on which the whole edifice of religious truth was erected in his time, and erected too more avowedly and confidently than ever. The criticism which he directed against the proofs for the existence of God stands in the forefront. As these proofs are the clearest affirmation of the basis alluded to, so the criticism of them is the most notable utterance of the thought of Kant on the side of negation. Besides, this is just the feature of his criticism that has been most generally preserved down to the present. Those proofs, in the sense which Orthodoxy and the *Aufklärung* had attached to them, have not recovered from the blows then inflicted on them. Even those who set the old edifice in order for present uses seek

other foundations for it. Thus it is this feature of Kant's Criticism that stands in the foreground for our consciousness. Yet the criticism of Rational Psychology has similar significance. For by it the rational proof which it was considered possible to give for the Immortality of the Soul was destroyed. And, following the existence of God, the Immortality of the Soul was the other mainstay of rational faith.

But we shall be more accurate here if we do not rest in particulars merely, but fix our eyes on the common ground that unites the two subjects referred to. It is the employment of reason in connection with them *in a way which transcends the limits of experience.* Against that use of it Kant's Criticism is directed.

We cannot attempt by means of theoretical arguments to make out anything as to what lies beyond experience, unless we allow human reason power to prescribe laws for human knowledge. Now, Kant in no wise denied that such power resides in it. He rather asserted that it does belong to it to an extent that scarcely any one before him imagined. But in respect to this lawgiving prerogative he restricted the theoretical reason, including the understanding, to its use in experience. For, according to his doctrine, the condition of its use is the sensuous intuition in which alone objects are presented to us by the understanding. The *a priori* Categories of the Understanding come to be applied to the sphere of external and internal experience, because they themselves are a condition of the possibility of all experience; and the same holds true of Time and Space, on the other hand, as the *a priori* forms of sense. But they have no

application where this second condition of a possible experience is wanting. True, it is not inferred from that that they must not be applied to the *Noumenon* at all. It would be possible, indeed, that we might have a guarantee from some other quarter, say in the sphere of practice, of their applicability to it. That matter must be left *in suspenso* by the Criticism of Pure Reason. Or, at all events, that Criticism can only hold it to be probable that such is the case, because the Categories are given *a priori;* it can make out nothing for certain on the subject. In any case it is firmly established that the Categories taken by themselves do not bring the thinking mind beyond experience. If it nevertheless takes them and the Ideas of Theoretical Reason as guides in such a venture, it wanders astray into the sphere of dialectical illusion. Or rather, as it does that naturally and inevitably, it must guard against taking that illusion for substance; and against this the Critical Philosophy seeks to protect it. Criticism, therefore, hits the very point at which the theoretical arguments for the Existence of God and the Immortality of the Soul are formed, inasmuch as it unmasks those arguments, and shows them to be figments of the brain, proving the use of reason exhibited by them to be erroneous.

The point of this Criticism seems to be directed against all speculation, in particular, therefore, against every possible kind of speculative theology. And that is correct generally speaking. Only in describing the matter thus, we must not let ourselves be deceived as to the import of Criticism. It was by no means simply overstrained speculations and *a priori* con-

structions of a supersensuous world that now required to have a limit fixed for them. It is not the case that in face of this Criticism we could, by giving up to it the Ontological proof, reserve the Cosmological and the Physico-Theological proofs; if it is right, both of these are set aside. One who might think, let us suppose, that these latter proofs rested on nothing but simple daily experience, and that Kant himself after all founds assured knowledge on experience, would not have understood what experience in Kant's sense means. And apart altogether from the question whether on Kant's view matters must rest at this point or not—he would not have made it sufficiently clear to himself that the conclusions of those arguments reach beyond all experience, that in truth it is only *a leap* from the knowledge which rests on experience that leads to the knowledge which *they pretend* they have derived from experience *without a leap.*

For the fact is, *it is a speculative use of reason which lies even at the back of the rational and empirical explanation of the world.* Hence, owing to its inadequacy, that explanation cannot be maintained under any circumstances. Either such a use of reason is trustworthy and therefore warranted; and in that case far more can be attained than the explanation in question undertakes to accomplish. Or it cannot be upheld in face of a thorough-going criticism like that applied by Kant: in that case the rational and empirical explanation of the world as well as the speculative comes to nothing. In short, it has lost the game under all circumstances. That is an unanswerable consequence of the Kantian Criticism.

Doubtless human reason has an insight here required of it which strikes most people as very strange. It is surely just this mode of explaining the world that rests on the habits of thought by which common reason is characterised, the habits formed and upheld by intercourse with the world of experience. It seems therefore so simple and self-evident, so thoroughly rational, to be indeed a thing demanded by reason, that we should transfer to the world as a whole what has proved its worth daily in connection with details. This must be kept in mind, and it must be remembered, in addition, that it is no less the habits of life of the common man of earnest mind that the practical wisdom of the *Aufklärung* and Rationalism connects itself with, if we are to understand the claim to reasonableness put forward by these movements. Everything is here so clear and rational, that the objections made almost seem to the simple understanding to be the outcome of an evil intention. Kant, however, gave the death-blow to this supreme embodiment of reason, to the *Aufklärung* and theoretical Rationalism.

If, therefore, we conceive the negative effect which he produced in its wide connection, it is this. The preceding development had consisted in the fact that the rational and empirical tendency of thought rose ever more victorious over the speculative and mystical, and at length supplanted the latter entirely. It is now put on its trial itself; it is itself convicted of resting on a speculation that hides away in shame. And at this point the development reaches the close of a preliminary stage. The process of destruction is

completed; what has been arrived at on the paths hitherto followed is dialectical illusion, *i.e.* nothing.

Kant, however, contemplated in his intention nothing so little as negation. At the back of his negation there stands a new affirmation. True, he follows the maxim that one should not let himself be disturbed in the work of Criticism by the apparent losses that result from it. But this maxim is based on the expectation, which he has found to be confirmed by experience, that the unhesitating prosecution of Criticism will prove that to be a gain which at first seems to be a loss. And if he had not been concerned with making an affirmation; if he had not been guided in the last resort by *his confidence in the truth;* such an extraordinary and important effect would not have been produced by him as was actually realised. As regards religious faith in particular, Kant did not so much aim at destroying its foundation as at removing one main cause of doubt and of opposition to it. *That is the difference, and it is a very real one, between Scepticism and his Criticism.* The former plumes itself on having destroyed old folly; the latter boasts of having established old truth anew. This observation refers in the first instance to the sphere of religious and moral truths. But it may be applied to the whole undertaking of Kant in comparison with Scepticism. While the latter denies all sure knowledge, such knowledge finds with Kant, within the limits he has fixed for it, of course, a sure foundation. It is quite unwarranted to bring a charge of Scepticism against Kant. He is the exact opposite of a Sceptic. He assumes a sceptical attitude only towards the un-

critical, dogmatic use of reason and its results; and therefore he can appear in the light of Scepticism only to such as are unable to rid themselves of the habit of identifying the chief good of men with these. One who has overcome this groundless prejudice, which has only the power of custom to support it, must simply see in that Scepticism the incomparable merit of the Critical Philosophy. It implies the liberation of scientific pursuits from exactions which they cannot satisfy: that is its negative side. It implies a reference of the highest truths there are for us men to their proper sphere, that of practical faith: that is its positive side. And this positive element, as represented by Kant, means the establishment of Religion, and so too of the Philosophy of Religion and Theology, on the motives of practical life and thought, *i.e.* in his sense on Morality. Let us try now briefly to estimate this positive merit of the Critical Philosophy with regard to Theology.

It is one of the greatest and most successful advances in the knowledge of truth that is made here by human reason. Herrmann in his work *On Religion in relation to the Knowledge of the World and to Morality*, repeatedly expresses the view[1] that between the Reformation and the undertaking of Kant there exists an organic connection, that it represents the facts of the case if we recognise in the latter a result and a prosecution of the Reformation. To this I for my part can only assent. In doing so, I reflect on the impulse given by the Reformation to the liberation of Christian truth from the course of

[1] Page 17 and frequently.

thought followed by ancient philosophy, to which from Apologetic considerations that truth had been committed by the early Church, and to the presentation of it in a form which answers to its *own internal* economy. This impulse comes to light in the opposition which the Reformers, Luther and Melanchthon especially, raised at the commencement against the Scholastic form of doctrine. It asserts itself in the accentuation of that practical character of the truths of faith which requires them to be grouped as a whole round the centre of the salvation which is in Christ. Especially do the *Loci* of Melanchthon in their first form give evidence of what has been said. Now Kant helped this very impulse to come to its issue, when he taught that the articles of religion should be understood from the motives of *practical* life and thought and based upon them. Doubtless it was Schleiermacher especially who at a later time, and with more success than Kant, put that principle in force, and that with such effect that scarcely a theologian can afford at this day to neglect it. Yet Schleiermacher must be put behind Kant, were it only for the reason that he was second in order, having the latter as his predecessor. Besides, the new principle, as modified by Schleiermacher, is not in the long run compatible with Christianity, whereas like scruples cannot be raised with reference to Kant's conception of it.

That appears from a historical retrospect, which at the same time thoroughly places the merit of Kant with regard to the matter in the right light. The impulse alluded to soon ceased to operate even in

the days of the Reformation. It is out of the question that it attained to thorough predominance in Protestant Dogmatics. Rather, as we have seen, did the latter immediately return to the governing principle of traditional theological study, *i.e.* of Scholasticism. But why did that come to be the case? The reason for that issue we also discovered, in the fact that the general circumstances of mental life brought it in their train (p. 192). The inalienable claim of Christianity that it is universal truth, and should be held to be such, demands a very particular consideration of these circumstances. As was previously stated, we can only think of developing Christian truth as dogma, as the rule of faith, without subtraction from its content, and without an adaptation to norms which are foreign to it, if it is first of all shown that a conviction as to supersensuous things, and consequently an answer to the ultimate questions which we come to ask, is *always* arrived at on the ground of *practical* motives, and so only must and can be arrived at. This perception, however, was wanting at the time of the Reformation. For this reason also the impulse that came from it, tending to produce a thorough transformation of Dogmatics, could not have full effect given to it. On the other hand, it is just that perception which rose through the agency of Kant on the horizon of human knowledge, and can never from this time forward be definitively lost again. He therefore removed a substantial obstruction that lay till his time in the way of a pure Evangelical Protestant system of theology, one that is founded only on Revelation. And therefore it may be concluded that he gave a

powerful impetus to the *completion of the Reformation in Protestant theology.* Doubtless Schleiermacher's succeeding System of Theology has peculiar advantages as compared with the Kantian Philosophy of Religion; and the great merit which it has in connection with the same subject ought in no wise to be depreciated. But precisely in respect to the point mentioned above, on which in the last resort all depends, Schleiermacher again forsook the path which Kant had opened up. Together with practical faith, he recognises a "highest knowledge" of Philosophy; and though he does not want to have it made the standard of the Christian faith, the "highest knowledge," if there really is anything of the kind, must after all, according to the logic of the matter, enforce itself again as such a standard. In other words, there is implied in this a restoration of the obstruction which Kant had removed out of the way. It is therefore to Kant above all that the substantial merit in this matter is due.

But it is possible to give a still more precise description of the new departure which we meet with here, and so to view the positive work of Kant in a still wider historical connection. This matter was previously indicated, but it deserves to be stated more explicitly.

Kant gave back to Christianity the practical faith which distinguished it, after that faith had lost, from the second century onwards, in and through theology, the character peculiar to it. Now the transformation of the Christian faith that had taken place in those early times was associated with the idea *that man must seek*, and that he is able to find, *his chief good*

on the path of knowledge. On this primary idea, as it appears plainly and positively down to the time of Thomas Aquinas, the father of our Dogmatics of the Schools, the traditional system rests. *And it is this primary idea that has its supremacy overthrown by Kant.* He liberated the governing idea of the chief good from that combination with knowledge, and placed it instead in the closest relation to man's active moral life. For this, I remind the reader (p. 91), is the alternative presented in this matter, viz. that we aspire to the chief good, *i.e.* participation in the life of God, in one of two ways—seeking to possess ourselves of it either by means of knowledge, or by the training of the moral will. The question in its narrower issue is, which of the two means ought to be ranked as superior to the other. Do I seek God, and in Him the chief good, on the path of knowledge, and do I allow my practical action to be prescribed for me in the last resort by that consideration? Or do I know that this chief object can be reached only on the path of moral activity, and that the highest knowledge itself is attainable only in and through such endeavour? The former is that principle of ancient heathen philosophy which came to supply in dogma a standard for the systematic presentation of the truth of the Christian faith itself. The latter is the principle of the Gospel and of its first witnesses. The chief significance of the positive work of Kant may accordingly be described by saying that he first expressed this primary idea of the Christian religion as an *absolute principle*, and *established it philosophically*, by his Criticism of man's intellectual faculty.

But, again, it is not intended, in saying this, to assert that the Christian faith, and what Kant held it to be, coincide. Such an assertion would be, besides, an obvious contradiction of the state of matters as appearing in history. However, what has just been said is quite compatible with the circumstance that Kant did not do justice to the full content of the Christian faith, and in his time could not do justice to it. Where there is in the history of thought a new point of departure affecting principles, it is not so much the amount of the material influenced by the new departure that is of consequence, as the fact that it does occur. What confronted Kant, what he directed his Criticism against, was not the whole unbroken dogma of the Christian Church. Just as little was it the case that what he set up instead was the Christian faith as based on practice, without deduction or diminution. But as certainly as it was the case that what fell before his Criticism was the remains of dogma which had survived a long process of formation and destruction, it is true that even the full content of the Christian faith may be recovered by starting from the point of departure obtained through him. Indeed, in view of the whole development, one feels tempted to hazard the statement that the previous reduction of dogma to some few and simple leading propositions was favourable to the new departure in the sphere of principles, or was even necessary in the interest of it. However, that is only a remark hazarded without proof, and so it does not advance the knowledge of facts.

But, as appears from what has been said, the con-

nection between Kant and the *Aufklärung*, or Rationalism, in spite of all the opposition that existed, was really, on the other hand, of a very positive kind. If, therefore, Kant was represented above as having given the death-blow to theoretical Rationalism, he must nevertheless be described himself as a Rationalist and a promoter of Rationalism in theology and the Church. He deprived it of its theoretical foundation, but not without giving it another basis derived from morality. The circle of religious truths in which he interests himself is fixed for him by Rationalism, and beyond this circle he does not pass in any essential respect. Hence, too, is explained the fact that the effects on Church and theology which were immediately produced by Kant were limited to a moral deepening and a spiritualising of Rationalism, and made no difference with respect to the supremacy it held, but only confirmed that supremacy.

From this it becomes apparent already how complicated is the manner in which the threads of the historical development are intertwined. The great philosopher proves to be dependent in a material respect on the very school which he destroys in the formal sense by his Criticism. The same fact comes to light still more plainly in the circumstance that in the succeeding development of philosophy Kantian thought became the starting-point of a series of constructive systems. In that way it acted indirectly on the future course of theological movements with even much more intensity than it did in virtue of its own distinctive nature. We shall have to speak of that in a final section of this chapter. For the present

what interests us in the first place is the starting-point of that philosophical movement which we find in Kant's Criticism.

The significance of the movement may be characterised by saying that in and through it a grand *reaction of the Speculative, Mystical type of thought appeared as against Rationalism in all spheres of man's mental life.* And now, if we recollect that the point of the Kantian Criticism was directed against speculative theology itself in its most shamefaced form, it is in the highest degree surprising to see such a movement connecting itself with that Criticism, and indeed springing out of it. Yet on closer consideration it is quite conceivable after all.

It is conceivable even if we look only to the declarations of Kant in reference to theoretical knowledge, and entirely disregard the Postulates which are derived from Practical Reason.

Undoubtedly Kant limits theoretical knowledge as respects its possibility to the sphere of experience. But others did so too before him; that cannot be taken as the new feature of his doctrine. The new feature, and at the same time the one on which in Kant's own view depends that progress of philosophy for which the way was smoothed by his Criticism, is the mode in which he succeeds in combining with this limitation of knowledge to experience a strong accentuation of the *a priori* element of our knowledge. Of that a Bacon had known nothing. It is true he made certain deductions from a naïve experience, and eliminated the disturbing influences of subjectivity; but what then remained over was for him equivalent

to the objective condition of things with which experience makes us acquainted. And Locke, who first wrote a Natural History of the Human Understanding, started by expressly denying innate ideas. He derived the whole possession of human reason from external and internal experience. It is true that had the effect that he disputed the objective significance of the notion of Substance, and that Hume, by extending that negation to the notion of Causality, ended by denying the whole necessity of knowledge. But these views are distinguished from the endeavours of Kant by nothing less than their presupposition of the notions of experience and knowledge in the "naïve" "dogmatic" sense, and therefore by what Kant aimed at overthrowing. He himself takes exactly what Hume had denied, the necessary character of knowledge, as his point of departure; and solves the problem thereby presented, by explaining experience together with all the knowledge that springs out of it, in respect to its possibility, as resulting from the *a priori* possession of the human mind. In this consists the new feature of his standpoint. It lies in this, that for him the problem of the theory of knowledge is no other than that of so explaining the fact of necessary knowledge that the contradictions of the old dogmatic view are avoided. And it lies, further, in the solution he gives of this problem in the manner just described.

On the other hand, it is the characteristic of *Speculative* thought that it seeks to conceive the given world from the basis of initial presuppositions. But, while aiming at this, it must somehow bring these presuppositions which it accepts into connection with

the constitution of the human mind; it must derive them somehow from the original possession of the human mind as bent on knowledge. For neither can it refer them to any other source, nor is it otherwise able to demonstrate their absolute truth, or without further evidence to credit every thinking person with the recognition of them.

If now we compare the view of Kant, according to which the centre of gravity of knowledge comes to lie in the *a priori* factor of it, and to speak more precisely in the creative functions of human reason—if we compare it with Speculation, which undertakes to conceive the world, and indeed to construct it, by means of those very functions, it is palpably apparent what an essential affinity there is here to be found. Undoubtedly they stand nevertheless in a relation of opposition to one another, in virtue of which Kant directed the point of his Criticism against Speculative Theology. *But it is an opposition occurring within the framework of an ultimate principle possessed by them in common.* For the philosophy of Kant has this peculiarity among others, that it may be conceived as a return to Speculative thought, a type of thought which, more and more repressed, had in latter times continued to be the light and the joy only of individual, isolated thinkers. In this way it becomes intelligible—apart altogether too from Practical Philosophy—how the Criticism of Kant became one of the most active of the impulses from which proceeded the great reaction that now began on the part of the Speculative, Mystical movement of thought as against Rationalism.

And then we have, in addition to this, the mode in which Kant establishes practical faith in God and the Immortality of the Soul. He derives it, although only in the form of Postulates, from the Practical Reason of man. And here again what lies at the basis of the process is a legislative function of reason, but now in the practical sense. In a legislation of the Practical Reason which cannot be farther analysed, the moral law has its origin and continuance; that law is a *necessary datum of Reason*, like the Categories of the Understanding and the Ideas of Reason. But the fact that the Postulates mentioned result from it is not founded on Reason alone. In order to understand this, we must add that man as a living being cannot possibly avoid setting his happiness as the aim of his existence. From both things together the Postulates in question result. For there follows from them the requirement that virtue and happiness ought to be in agreement, in such wise, viz., that virtue is the condition of happiness. The world of experience, however, does not satisfy that requirement. Still it is necessary for the sake of the moral law to hold fast to the idea of that agreement, *i.e.* to the idea of the chief good. And in view of the actual world we can do so only if we believe in God as the moral governor of the world, and in an existence of the soul after death. Such belief naturally arises in the mental situation just described. It can be brought home to the man of earnest mind who calls such belief in question, that he is quite unable to dispense with it, inasmuch as he must recognise the moral law. Here we have not to do with mere opinions and subjective imaginations,

because this belief is connected with the moral law, *i.e.* with a necessary datum of reason. We have simply Postulates of the Practical Reason, which must not, it is true, be confused with speculative knowledge, but still are *of absolute validity* in regard to practice. And since something is attained in this way which Speculative Reason cannot accomplish, Kant establishes the primacy of Practical Reason as compared with Speculative.

Now it is clear that there is a great difference between the legislative functions of pure Speculative Reason and these Postulates of Practical Reason. The former establish sure and necessary knowledge, but, owing to their relation to the intuition of Sense, they are bound to experience. The latter spring from the human faculty of judgment, although a necessary datum of reason lies at the basis of them. However they reach beyond the world of sensuous experience. But in this very fact, again, there lies an element *essentially akin to the Speculative mode of thought.* For it is a datum of inward experience, of self-contemplation, on the ground of which those limits which Kant otherwise so firmly adheres to are broken through, the limits, viz., of finite knowledge, that which is bound to experience.

Lastly, it must still be mentioned that in respect to this very question, so often discussed by him, the most momentous question of his system, the question, viz., of the manner in which theoretical knowledge and the faith of Practical Reason are connected, Kant has not arrived at conclusions which are simple, clear, everywhere the same. There remains here a certain want of

clearness, which is partly connected with his use of language, but still exists nevertheless for his readers. And yet their comprehension of him is what matters most if we are considering the influence that proceeded from him. The philosophy of Kant, regarded as a whole, puts before the adherent of it the problem of comprehending it as a unity and working it out from one supreme leading point of view. And now, if it shows such definite points of connection with speculative thought, why should the succeeding development not take the course thereby suggested? It did so in its main stream. Certainly in so doing it *failed to carry out the intentions of Kant*, and entered paths that were strange to him. But it is *intelligible* how matters took that course. Here we have now to consider further the influence which this restoration of speculative thought, occasioned as it was principally by Kant himself, produced on theology. And as we do so we shall see the last act played of the drama with which we are occupied in this chapter.

It cannot be affirmed that the development of intellectual life down to the *Aufklärung* had brought to light a sound and conclusive criticism of the speculative dogmas. The great systems of this epoch still had in the main decided sympathy with speculative thought. What led to the overthrow of those dogmas was not so much an actual advance of knowledge, which of course could not be permanently forgotten again, as a change in the general consciousness, the progress of empirical rationality in advance of speculative thought. The criticism of particular dogmas, as

it is accomplished on this ground, is therefore very far from doing justice to the important connection in which they originally appeared. Even where it is warranted—and that it often is so to a great extent ought by no means to be denied—it does not give satisfaction, because it can set up nothing instead. That is, what it sets up instead is in the first instance nothing but a pale image of dogma, which is unable again to assert itself. Think only of the Christology of the Socinians, or of the theory of Hugo Grotius as to the necessity of Christ's death as an example of punishment, or of the derivation of the consequences of the Fall from the poisonous nature of the fruit, in eating which the Fall of the first pair is represented in the Biblical story as having consisted. If these theorems are compared with the traditional dogmas, the latter, when judged from the point of view of the Christian faith, with all the justification there is for the criticism brought to bear on them, plainly deserve the most decided preference. For though they do not coincide exactly with the truths of the Christian faith, they still give expression to them in their own way. Those substitutes, on the other hand, hold fast, it is true, to the *shell* of dogma, but the *kernel*, which is of importance, they let go. We can perfectly conceive how they themselves immediately disappeared again, how in place of such impoverishment simple denial finally set in. Only the criticism that led to that issue can by no means be held conclusive. And therefore it also made it not impossible that at a later time men could think of restoring those dogmas in their original sense.

And here the point is now reached which is of principal importance when we are judging the succeeding course of the development. In that whole epoch which we have just recalled, *no analysis of the relation between the Christian faith and the speculative thought of tradition was arrived at. The interests of both still appear to have a solidarity of connection.* The truth of the Christian faith, or rather of its characteristic doctrines, those attaching to the Revelation in Christ, seems to depend on the vindication of the speculative method; the destruction of those doctrines can be reckoned as a consequence of the overthrow of that method. In short, the fortunes of both are still implicated in the closest manner with each other.

It is true the historical research of that time, which was bursting freshly into bloom, led among other things to the perception of the fact that the Platonic philosophy had a substantial share in the origin of the speculative dogmas in the early Church. Then that discovery no doubt was pointed against them, and the inference was drawn that these dogmas could not be reckoned part of the original stock of Christianity. But in what way was this done? In such wise that there was no consciousness whatever of the fact that something similar was true of the doctrines which were adhered to as the rational essence of original Christianity. In such wise, therefore, that there was an entire failure to perceive the truth that, after all, in spite of what was discovered, the centre of gravity of the Christian faith lies in those Platonising dogmas. As certainly, therefore, as the fact which served as the occasion for these reflections was correct, the use which

was made of it in the interests of an enlightened rational faith was false and failed of effect. No one will give out the result then arrived at as an analysis of the relation between the Christian faith and the speculative philosophy of antiquity. The synthesis of the two as a matter of fact still occurs as before; only, for the reasons often mentioned, the one part of dogma, the speculative, is gradually transformed and in the end wholly denied.

The fact may further be pointed out, that even in that epoch speculative philosophy did not remain unfruitful, but put forth a blossom of the first order in the system of Spinoza, a system which takes up an attitude of decided opposition to dogma no less than to the Christian faith. Here there is really found, it seems, a commencement of that analysis which we missed everywhere else. In fact, the philosophy of Spinoza acquired great influence in this direction as in others. Only it did not do so at the particular period of its rise, and not at all in the Pre-Kantian epoch, but first of all in the speculative philosophy that followed Kant. Thus for the earlier period which is here dealt with it does not fall to be considered. Lastly, if Lessing is fond of working with the opposition between eternal truths of reason and accidental truths of history, a note is undoubtedly struck there which was afterwards to sound more clearly when the settlement between the Christian faith and speculative philosophy was arranged. But in the first instance it was only a symptom of the incapacity of the *Aufklärung* to understand the significance of history, from which even Lessing could only set himself free in a very limited

degree. On the whole, therefore, it may certainly be affirmed that the interests of that faith which is true to the Christian Revelation and those of speculative thought still present in the first instance an appearance of solidarity.

In consonance with this, we have the circumstance that the resuscitation of speculative philosophy after Kant contributed its part to the resuscitation of Christian faith among large classes of people. Nothing in the preceding development could prevent the expectation of a lasting result from that. As men stood under the new banners, everything invited not merely to a denial of the religious *Aufklärung* and the criticism of the faith in Revelation from which it had sprung, but to an intellectual disproof of them. That is true even if we judge the position of things from the standpoint of the Christian faith. Above all, if one takes his stand on ecclesiastical dogma, it may even be said that the revival of speculative philosophy must have seemed the only means and the really adequate means of restoring that dogma in scientific form.

Certainly the so-called ecclesiastical revival in our century does not rest in a one-sided manner, and does not rest primarily, on this philosophical development. Strictly religious motives, and further, the reawakened sense for historical and therefore also for ecclesiastical tradition as such, perhaps contributed most to that result. So too in this connection we must not forget the influence of Schleiermacher, which was an important factor in the reaction against theological Rationalism, although it could not be directly put down to the credit of speculative philosophy. Still it

remains true, that in the situation as it existed the latter must have commended itself as the *only adequate means for bringing about the intellectual regeneration of dogma.* Schleiermacher, it is true, also made use of the old forms again, but sought in so doing to fill them with a new content. He had nothing to do with reviving the old *Dogmatics;* if the theology that started with him often falls into that channel, it has in so doing passed substantially beyond the range of the impulses received from him. On the other hand, speculative philosophy must in the end have come in contact in its own way with those basal thoughts of the speculative dogmas which were so long put aside. And if there was any such philosophy, in it and in it alone lay the intellectual means for the preservation and assertion of dogma. The latter had originally sprung from a union with two movements of thought which were not antagonistic to one another, but were certainly different. Now, one of them had proved itself incapable of serving by itself alone to furnish a scientific presentation and justification of the Christian faith in its full compass. Still further, *in its opposition to the other* it had definitively and for ever fallen into bankruptcy (p. 281). How else now could a philosophical justification of dogma be yet hoped for, except by means of the other, *i.e.* by means of speculative philosophy?

Such, therefore, is the significance of this speculative philosophy in its influence on theology. It represents the attempt to justify dogma anew with the intellectual means which corresponded to it and were essentially akin to it. But that attempt proved abortive. Instead of having the effect that was pur-

posed and hoped for, it has had the clear result—isolated after-effects of the Hegelian philosophy in the theology of the present day make no difference in this matter—that between the Christian faith and the consistently developed ideas of this speculative philosophy an *opposition* is established. Dogma stands in the centre between the two, just because it arose from a co-operation of the two factors. But this central position cannot be maintained in the long run, because it seeks to unite religious and moral types of thought which are opposed to each other—a thing impossible when once the opposition that exists has manifested itself without ambiguity. At least in the sphere of Protestantism it becomes for that reason impossible. For Catholicism the matter stands otherwise, because here the whole structure of faith and life rests on a compromise between Christianity and this other factor, by which one's consciousness of the Christian faith in its original purity is obscured. The result for dogma therefore turns out to be that this justification suddenly changes into the destruction of it, its destruction being now for the first time carried out and completed. And therefore it will be impossible to deny that here we are dealing with a vital element, the one which first of all leads to a consummation, in the process of the destruction of ecclesiastical dogma. We purpose now to take a somewhat closer view of the course of things in detail.

First of all, we have to observe at this point that it is the system of Schelling (in its earlier form) and that of Hegel that fall specially to be considered. Now, if these have been taken heretofore without hesitation to be a revival of the speculative philosophy of tradition,

the intention is not of course simply to identify them with earlier systems. They are distinguished from these, say from Neo-Platonism and the philosophy of Spinoza, above all by the fact that they have the Critical Idealism of Kant as their historical starting-point, and also derive from it the means for establishing themselves. So too the æsthetic trait appears well marked in them, especially in Schelling. Still, that is a feature that has its connecting links after all with the father of speculation in the West, with the "divine" Plato. The philosophy of Schelling in this way is incorporated in the intellectual movement which we call *Romanticism*, which did battle in the most varied spheres of mental life, principally with *Æsthetic means*, against the "shallow" *Aufklärung* and "poverty-stricken" Rationalism. Romanticism certainly owes its successes chiefly to the circumstance that it promised satisfaction to long-neglected and yet deeply-rooted needs of the human mind, needs which lay beyond the horizon of the reason of the *Aufklärung*. That same result afterwards fell to the credit of speculation on its revival, adapted as it was to the general bent of thought. But if there are such very essential differences between the earlier speculation and the new, still they coalesce in the most important features. And that holds true particularly of their attitude in relation to religion.

As to that matter, one may get information as clear as could possibly be wished from Schelling's Lectures on The Method of Academic Study.[1]

The fundamental thought that runs through this

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, Erste Abtheilung, Band 5.

treatise from beginning to end is no other than this, that *knowledge and still more science is the chief good for man.* All knowledge, it is said, is an endeavour to reach communion with the divine Being; it is a participation in that Absolute knowledge of which the visible universe is an image, and the source of which is the head of the Eternal Power.[1] Science leads to the life of blessedness; he who devotes himself to science can obtain in advance that for which experience and life only slowly train one, can now recognise in himself, and that too immediately, what can form the sole result of the life that is most thoroughly educated and richest in experience.[2] In consistency with this principle *active life in the world* is viewed with disparagement. True, Schelling expressly combats the view which opposes knowledge and action to one another. He values "true action" no less than knowledge. But what is true action? It is that in which the Finite imagines the Infinite,[3] which, through however many intermediate links, expresses Absolute action (=Absolute knowledge) and in it the Divine Nature.[4] From true moral energy—it is elsewhere said[5]—springs philosophy, which is derived entirely from pure reason and consists only of Ideas; Morality is the liberation of the soul from what is foreign and material, its elevation to the condition of being determined by pure reason without foreign admixture; he who has not purified his soul to the extent of participating in Absolute knowledge has also failed to reach ultimate moral perfection.

[1] P. 218. [2] P. 238. [3] P. 220. [4] P. 222.

[5] In that fifth volume of the works which we have cited, in the treatise *Ueber das Verhältniss der Naturphilosophie zur Philosophie überhaupt*, pp. 122 and 123.

Or, in other words, true action is the elevation of the soul to knowledge, something that is far exalted above the common duties of daily life, above the love of one's neighbour and such moral maxims.[1] True knowledge and true action coalesce in the union of man with the Absolute knowledge of God as the mystical consummation of man's mental life. And while in the case of all other systems there is an *Aristocracy of the enlightened* associated with such a conception, with Schelling too in the end that is in a great degree the case. In his judgment, only that person seems properly speaking to be a perfect man who is favoured by nature with a capacity for knowledge and philosophy. For only on that condition can the highest end be achieved; one's own efforts serve the purpose least of all; he who does not bring the talent with him finds the chief good eternally shut off from him.

In fact we have here the genuine characteristics of the Speculative type of thought which we formerly came to know as the outcome of Greek philosophy. And the philosopher himself is quite well aware of this essential connection. More than once he appeals in critical passages to Plato.

The way, now, in which *Religion* must be judged from this standpoint follows naturally from the quotations which have been made. No less than true knowledge and true action, are true philosophy and true religion also one, so that the one engenders the other.[2] Every philosophy is false that is not already religion in its principle.[3] But both are one in

[1] P. 303. [2] P. 257.

[3] P. 116 (in the treatise mentioned at p. 303, note 5).

a Pantheistic faith. It is the fundamental error of a false philosophy to want to have the Absolute out of oneself and the Ego outside the Absolute.[1] The deepest meaning of all religion is mystical union with the Absolute in one's own heart.[2] Or, in other words, the ideals of Mystical, Pantheistic, Natural Religion are here proclaimed. Only asceticism is completely wanting. In place of the renunciation of the world, there has come the æsthetic transfiguration of the world. But that no doubt occurs elsewhere also, where this religious tendency does not appear as the popular religion but as an art-product of philosophy.

To this judgment on the general question corresponds further the *interpretation of Christianity* presented by Schelling. According to the construction then accepted by him, there are altogether only two religious conceptions possible, either the immediate deification of the finite, or the vision of God in the finite, heathenism or Christianity. The former immediately sees the natural in the divine and in spiritual prototypes; and the latter sees through Nature as the infinite Body of God into the innermost region and into the Spirit of God.[3] Perfected Christianity is esoteric Mysticism.[4] Morality is nothing distinctive of Christianity; on the strength of some moral maxims about the love of one's neighbour and so forth, it would not have existed in the world and in history.[5] It owes its lasting significance in reality to the circumstance that it became the channel for the current which was

[1] P. 110 ff. (in the treatise mentioned at p. 303, note 5.
[2] P. 118 (*ibid.*).
[3] P. 120 (*ibid.*).
[4] P. 110 (*ibid.*).
[5] P. 303.

already the dominant one in the Indian religion.[1] Of the Biblical Books it is plainly said that on the score of true religious value they do not bear even distant comparison with the Indian.[2] Consistently with this, it is not the beginnings of Christianity and its original records that rank with Schelling as the genuine expression of it. Those who come after are the real originators of the pure Christian religion, the Fathers, who succeeded in drawing so much speculative matter from those poverty-stricken religious books.[3] Plato, in one sense a prophet of Oriental wisdom among the Greeks, was in another sense a Christian before Christianity.[4] The latter itself is a product of the universal spirit in the Roman empire at the time of its origin. It was not Christianity that enkindled that spirit, but Christianity was on its part a presentiment and anticipation of it, being the embodiment in which it first received form.[5] Then, too, there logically appears in more than one point a sympathy, doubtless not confessed, with Catholicism. The "Prose of Protestantism" does not fit this historical construction. What is understood by Christianity is really nothing but Catholicism; only the latter again is conceived in that aspect of it which is alien to Biblical Christianity.

Such now is the ground on which our philosophy succeeds in attracting interest once more to the long-neglected speculative dogmas, and estimating them as an expression of what constitutes the main substance of Christianity. The Incarnation of God in Christ is again recognised as the fundamental idea of Chris-

[1] P. 298. [2] P. 300. [3] P. 300.
[4] P. 298. [5] P. 297.

tianity.[1] In it there was accomplished at the same time the Atonement, which is nothing but the reunion with God of the Finite which had fallen away from Him, a reunion effected by His own birth into the Finite. This again is the crisis in the history of the universe which finds its adequate expression in the idea of the Trinity.[2] The doctrines of the Incarnation of God, of the Atonement through God suffering in His devotion to the Finite, and of the Trinity, are therefore conceived as the *truly rational fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion.* That sounds quite like an express revival of the speculative portions of dogma. But the meaning of the philosopher, as the parts quoted themselves show, is essentially different from that of the Church. As he understands the matter, the eternal Son of God, born of the nature of the Father of all things, is the Finite itself, as it exists in the eternal intuition of God.[3] The Incarnation of God is an Incarnation from eternity.[4] What the idea of the Trinity expresses is the history of the universe. The historical Person of Christ has only the significance of indicating the turning-point in history where the Incarnation of God reaches its culminating point, and at the same time, too, the beginning of it, in so far as all ought to imitate Him as the members of His body.[5] Or, in other words, the speculative ideas which were connected in the early Church with the Christian faith in the historical Revelation of God are exhibited in a new light as the rational meaning of dogma; but what forms the share which Christianity contributed to dogma

[1] P. 292. [2] P. 294. [3] P. 294.
[4] P. 298. [5] P. 298.

is estimated as the vesture and symbol of those ideas.

I have discussed this treatise of Schelling so exhaustively, because from it the practical principles and starting-points of the new Speculation, and so too the aspect of it which is allied to religion, may best be understood. It shows, at the same time, that in these matters it is not anything new that is treated of here, but the primitive ideas of religious, mystical Speculation, which reappear everywhere under all sorts of modifications. But that they do not coincide with the Church's dogma, though they aim at disclosing its meaning, can escape no one's observation. And from this attempt the opinion could hardly have been evolved, that speculative philosophy leads to a restoration of ecclesiastical dogma. For that there was still required a closer approximation on the part of philosophy to the Church's tenets. And that was effected not by Schelling but by Hegel.

Not as though there were a difference in substance worth mentioning between them. It is the same truth that Schelling proclaims as a prophet of the new age, and that Hegel undertakes to develop with philosophical rigour. But now Hegel declares expressly that the task awaiting solution is a restoration of Church doctrine,[1] and seeks to prove conclusively that his philosophy can accomplish something of the kind. And one cannot read his deliverances on the matter without receiving the impression that he himself is convinced of this, and that in his heart he aimed at it.

[1] *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, herausgegeben von Marheineke, Zweite Auflage, i. p. 33.

He felt his way into Christianity in a different manner altogether from Schelling, and made himself at home in it. True, that makes no difference in the fact that the meaning of philosophical speculation is in the last resort different from that of dogma. And as Hegel's thought moves wholly among the principles of the former, and as at critical points he does not really deny the true meaning of those principles, his position comes in that way to have something unstable about it, and his doctrine something ambiguous.

For our purpose it is superfluous to reproduce Hegel's conclusions here in detail. We observe merely the approximation he made towards dogma, by which he contributed so notably to the restoration of it. Here the chief importance attaches to the significance which he succeeds in imparting by means of his principles to the historical Person of the Saviour. For upon the judgment passed on that matter depends the particular way in which the meaning of everything else is determined.

If Christianity is the religion characterised by the unity of the divine and the human, we have to recognise the fundamental idea of Christianity in the *idea of God Incarnate.* That idea expresses the unity of God and man; it forms the content of the Absolute religion: the Incarnation of God is the fundamental fact of Christianity. These propositions contain nothing but what Schelling too had previously proclaimed. This is something quite different from what the Church doctrine means when it teaches the Incarnation of God in Christ. But yet, on the ground of the general idea, may it not be proved that there

is an essential and necessary significance attaching to this faith of the Church, *i.e.* to the faith that an individual, definite, historical person, who could be spoken of as "this man," is the God-Man in a special sense? That is what Hegel attempts to do. The consciousness of the unity of the divine nature and the human, he explains, must come to man *as man in general*, without the condition of a special training. But that can only be brought about when the Idea receives the form of an immediate sensuous intuition, of external existence, when it appears as something seen and met with in the world. That is, it must exhibit itself to consciousness in a manifestation of reality wholly belonging to time and perfectly common, in one who could be pointed to as *this* man, in *this* man who is at the same time known as the *Divine Idea*. Or we may say, the substantial unity of God and man is the nature of man in itself. As such, however, it is beyond common consciousness or knowledge. If it is also to exist for that, it must appear as an individual man distinguished from others, as Individuality on the ground of certainty. On this is based the truth and necessity of the ecclesiastical doctrine of Christ as the God-Man.[1]

Now it is clear that in this way there is deduced only the necessity *of this intuition, of this faith*, for the common consciousness; *how the case really stood with regard to the historical Person of Jesus Christ* is not considered any further; and according to the fundamental thought of the system the conclusion on

[1] *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, herausgegeben von Marheineke, Zweite Auflage, ii. pp. 282–286.

that matter cannot be different from what we find in Schelling. And in connection with the deduction in question we meet again and again with utterances of Hegel which expressly remind us of this. True, there are found along with these other utterances which take us beyond them. Thus, *e.g.*, when it is said[1] that in so far as the nature of Spirit, the nature of God, is to be revealed to man in the whole development of the Idea, the form of the Natural must also be found in it, the Divine must appear in the form of what is Immediate, in that spiritual fashion which is human,—the reference to the common consciousness which requires to have that intuition of the Idea is there left out of view. It seems as if he were speaking of a necessity due to the nature of God that He should appear as a definite individual man. And so, too, there is an ambiguity when the Indian doctrine of repeated incarnations is set aside as unsuitable, and when it is insisted on that it must be a definite, individual man in whom God appears.[2] But now it is simply due to this that a school of theology could arise which deduced by means of Hegelian Categories the truth and necessity of ecclesiastical dogma.

The picture of the new era which thus arose, with its perfect reconciliation of faith and knowledge, as drawn by Strauss in the introduction to his Dogmatics, is known to all. It is equally well known that the incisive writings of that theologian, the epilogue of his Life of Jesus, and his Dogmatics, indicate the catastrophe by which an end was put to that illusion.

[1] *Ibid.* ii. p. 285 f. [2] *Ibid.* ii. p. 286.

For though the latter has had after-effects continuing for a long time, and perhaps reaches down in its consequences to the present, yet it has long since lost its glamour. And where matters stand out so clear there cannot fail to be a general recognition of them. As a matter of fact, what must be understood by the articles regarding the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Atonement, in the sense of the Hegelian philosophy, and what the ecclesiastical doctrine means by them, are two different things. On the basis of that philosophy we cannot reach or justify the latter doctrine in its true unadulterated sense.

When Strauss wrote the works just mentioned, he himself occupied as yet the standpoint of Hegelian speculation, a position which at a later time he abandoned. He was therefore himself of opinion at that earlier period that the speculative results of that philosophy disclosed the deepest meaning and the truth of ecclesiastical dogma. What he combated was not the unity of the two in the deeper sense, but the restoration of dogma, *i.e.* of the imperfect and pictorial form of truth, the delusion which people cherished that by means of speculative philosophy they could justify that form in their own sense, *i.e.* as something else than a *pictorial form* indispensable for the common consciousness. That is the same standpoint which at a later time and down to the present has been represented principally by Biedermann.[1] With Strauss he put an end to all ambiguity, by carrying out to the end the criticism of ecclesiastical dogmas

[1] Pfleiderer, according to the newest edition of his *Philosophy of Religion*, can no longer be reckoned among the representatives of this school.

in the sense of his own principles. But, like Strauss in his earlier period, he was of opinion to the last that the Hegelian philosophy, to which he confessed himself an adherent as respects the fundamental thought of it, discloses the deeper and the true meaning of the Church's doctrine. He was distinguished from Strauss by laying greater stress on *pictorial representation* as the natural and necessary form of religious faith and thought, maintaining that even one who as a philosopher is able to apprehend truth in the adequate form of thought, does not for all that cease in his capacity as a religious person, as a Christian, to make use of pictorial forms. Thus, after all, while avoiding all the ambiguities denounced by Strauss, he came in his own way to have sympathy again with the common consciousness and the letter of the Church's doctrine. And as for the substance, both agreed that the philosophical wisdom of this new Speculation was meant to coincide with the spiritual content of dogma, and consequently with that of the Christian faith.

But in truth what occurs here, with Biedermann as with Strauss, is not what was intended, a liberation of the spiritual kernel from the husk of pictorial representation, and thereby a philosophical justification of Christianity, but the last act in the drama exhibiting the breaking-up and destruction of *dogma*. For this spiritual content of dogma, which Biedermann obtains as the result of his labours in Dogmatics, is not the Christian faith, but the Logos speculation in a new shape; and in what is explained away as the pictorial form there lies the share which Christianity contributed to the formation of dogma. Compare simply

the impelling motive of the Logos speculation, according to which man has to seek his loftiest aim and his chief good in knowledge, with the principle which Biedermann, following Hegel, proclaims when he says that *logical Being is the substance of Spirit*:[1] the intrinsic affinity of the two systems of thought is plain enough there to every one who is willing to see. The very same affinity may be recognised everywhere in details. It was previously shown that the Logos idea leads to a Pantheistic faith; and though Biedermann will not own it, his doctrine of God and the world is really nothing but what we commonly understand by Pantheism. So too the interpretation of the Person of Christ by means of the Logos idea substitutes for the Son of God, who became man in Christ, the world as it is in God's eternal thought, and it was only the later development of dogma that gradually eliminated the thought of the world: in the same way, again, in the doctrine of the Trinity as appearing in modern philosophy, the Finite, as the counterpart of God, is the second Person of the Godhead. And the historical Person of Jesus has in both cases the significance of being the perfect prototype in religion, because in connection with this species of faith any other estimate of an individual man has no place. And lastly, instead of history in the simple and plain sense of the word, that history which the Christian knows as the theatre of Divine Revelation, there appears in both cases the history of the Universe, of the Sum of things. The Fall of man as well as the Incarnation of God and the Atonement are under-

[1] *Dogmatik*, Zweite Auflage, i. p. 148.

stood in this Speculative connection. In short, wherever we look, the analogy is unmistakably apparent.

Thus side by side with the *Aufklärung*, modern theological Speculation forms another terminal point in the history of dogma. If the theologians of the *Aufklärung* are cognate with the Apologists of the second century, these Speculative theologians have their intellectual congeners in the Alexandrians, in virtue of that aspect of their thought which drew the latter to Neo-Platonism. We shall also be warranted in extending the parallel to the circumstance that their connection with the faith and life of the Christian Church still keeps the *men themselves*, at the present day just as in the former period, in vital contact with Christianity. But their *Theology* does not represent that faith. And that must be said of the modern systems much more decidedly than of the ancient. For that portion of the faith of the Church that was contained in the latter is put aside by the former as Mediæval folly, or as an inadequate pictorial form, as the case may be. It was just in connection with these elements that the development of ecclesiastical theology took place in the early Church, a development in which a gradual Christianising of the philosophical ideas was the issue. What appeared there as the promising beginnings of a long and important history, are here the offshoots of that history which have no future. They are only a proof that it is really impossible in the last resort to set forth and to justify Christianity with those intellectual aids which, as being the inheritance derived from antiquity, were employed for that purpose in the early Church.

CHAPTER V.

THE JUDGMENT OF HISTORY.

Criticism of the prevailing views in regard to the Development of Dogma—The Judgment of History in regard to Dogma.

THE record of the inquiry is now before us. We have, in closing, to find out what the judgment is to be.

The Christian religion—everything connected with it—is in so eminent a degree a matter of *history*, that one cannot take up any definite standpoint on dogmatic questions without forming a judgment in reference to the history of dogma. Indeed, we must add that what is to gain a lasting position in that sphere must be able to give a satisfactory account of its relation to the past. That is, it must be shown that past history can be understood and estimated from the standpoint supposed to have been gained, that history itself seems to lead to such a view and no other.

But this relation to history has always two sides. On the one hand, of course, it depends on one's own convictions how one thinks he ought to judge the historical development. But, on the other hand—and on this the greater weight has to be laid—*we must admit that history itself teaches something.* And the things it teaches are not entirely dependent on the manner in which they are looked at. For history is a reality given in the same way for all, so that in-

ferences possessing absolute value can be deduced from it. Forms, *e.g.*, which it has destroyed by a slow but irresistible process, may doubtless recover some animation for a time, but cannot be definitively restored to life again. Strauss—apart altogether from the application he makes of his conclusion—is right in the judgment itself which he pronounces, when he says that the subjective criticism of the individual is a tiny stream which any child can keep back for a while, but that the objective criticism which is consummated in the course of centuries hurls itself forward like a roaring torrent, against which all sluices and dams are of no avail.[1]

Now, that estimate of dogma and its development which we have to describe at the present time again as that which prevails most widely among us, is to this effect, that dogma was built up, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, *as the necessary expression, and in its main features the permanently determinative expression, of Christian truth.* This, the traditional view, was formerly that which universally prevailed. It is quite intelligible how it should have been revived among us. The restoration of dogma in theology entailed that. The two things mutually condition each other, viz. the recognition of dogma and this judgment in regard to its origin. That is only a special illustration of the general rule mentioned at the beginning, according to which there is always found to be a close connection here. But, more strictly speaking, what we are considering is the *Catholic* view of dogma, of course with that modification which

[1] *Dogmatik*, i., Vorrede, p. x.

is made necessary owing to the position it has in the Church of the Reformation. The Scholastic theology of the Middle Ages is not regarded without demur as an advance in the development of dogma, but partly at least as a deviation from the proper path, a deviation afterwards corrected at the Reformation. Therefore, too, it is not the doctrinal decrees of the Council of Trent as resting on that theology, that pass for the conclusive and regulative termination of the development: it is the formation of Confessions in the Evangelical or Lutheran Church that is so regarded. But that *formally* at all events—apart from the modification just mentioned—the view we speak of is *also* the Catholic estimate of dogma, having been first formed in that Church, and having a necessary connection with its standpoint, no one will be able to deny, neither he who assents to it nor he who rejects it.

However, it is not enough to speak of the restoration of a traditional view. At present, for a theology which adheres on principle to the presentation of Christian truth which we have in dogma, that view has more importance than ever. For such a theology it contains the authorisation of its standpoint as the one which represents the Christian religion, and which is required by divine Revelation. Formerly the case was different, in so far as the estimate of dogma now referred to was retained or resumed in Protestant theology, on the supposition that dogma can be derived as it stands from the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Thus the Holy Scriptures furnished then the authorisation of dogma; the fact

that the development of it went on under the guidance of the Holy Spirit must accordingly have been regarded as self-evident, but had no further significance in point of principle. At the present day the position of these factors relatively to each other has been shifted. No one affirms any longer that dogma as it stands is contained in Holy Scripture and can be derived in finished form from it. One can at most attempt to prove that the formation of dogma is a necessary continuation of the beginnings of Christian doctrine which are furnished by Holy Scripture. But even supposing the proof of that were satisfactory, Holy Scripture would be made in consequence to occupy a wholly different position from that which represents the intention of the Reformation and the principles of orthodox Dogmatics. For although it contained, as was asserted, the beginnings which were determinative, as regulating the future course, it would after all be only the first link in a chain of development. But, as the immediate effect, the importance of dogma in comparison with Holy Scripture would be materially increased. Holy Scripture would no longer be the source and norm of theology, but the beginning of ecclesiastical tradition. However, the proof alluded to is not really to be had. For, apart altogether from the question what weight one will assign to it, the fact is certain in the eyes of every one who is able and willing to see these things, that the constructive march of thought in Holy Scripture is different from what it is in dogma. What are deductions in the former case, arrived at in the final issue, are in the latter case made the basis of the whole (p. 112). But now in order

to regard the content in the two cases as identical—and that every Protestant theologian does and every Protestant theologian must do who takes up his position on the ground of dogma—and then where the statements of Holy Scripture touch dogma to be able to interpret them in the sense of the latter, one must strongly insist on the supernatural character of the beginnings of dogma, a course which was superfluous for the old Dogmatics. In other words, the interpretation of Holy Scripture in the sense of dogma, which is indispensable for this standpoint, must be justified by referring the formation of dogma to the working of the Holy Spirit as the method required by Christianity. This is the shifting of the factors which took place here, and which I spoke of. To this the fact is due that this estimate of dogma has more importance for the so-called ecclesiastical Dogmatics of the present than what fell to it in early Protestantism. And it must here be expressly and emphatically stated, that all that can be said for the maintenance of theological tradition, and is often enough said for it, can *rationally* have only this significance among Christians: by this means the process of the formation of dogma has such supernatural significance ascribed to it as has been mentioned.

As a rule, doubtless, this idea is kept in the background and other matter is more strongly insisted on by the representatives of this cast of theology. Frank,[1] *e g.*, has given to this new basis of Dogmatics, new, *i.e.*,

[1] And Frank may well stand here as a conspicuous representative of a widespread movement, in so far as the practice is followed by many which he makes a principle: the articles of dogma are developed from the Christian consciousness or from experience of the Christian salvation.

in relation to early Protestantism, a shape in which it is adapted to the advances of theological knowledge, and taken into connection with the evangelical Protestant conception of Christianity. For it does appear in such a new form if the conclusion arrived at as to the process of the formation of dogma is that the experimental consciousness possessed by the Christian community as to God's acts of saving grace which have written attestation in Scripture, is expressed in doctrinal form in dogma. The ultimate basis for the whole subject of Dogmatics is sought by Frank in the doctrine of Christian Certainty, a theory according to which the Christian is assured of the facts of his faith just as men in general are assured of the facts of their natural consciousness; only the difference in the experience in each case is stipulated for in the theory: on the strength of that assurance, dogma then comes to stand as the witness of the Church to the facts of its faith. It is well worth noting, however, that the old Protestant principle of Divine Revelation or of Holy Scripture as the sole rule of knowledge in theology, is hereby expressly and consciously given up. Still, it cannot be denied that in this way the stand which is taken on the content of dogma, and that stand is in reality the vital matter, *is justified in the sense of Evangelical principles and of modern theology.* For certainly this is the undeniable advance that has been made in theology, that we want to be able to understand Christian doctrines first of all from the basis of practical faith. And it answers thoroughly to the Protestant principle, if we estimate the whole doctrine as an expression of that faith. The question is, whether

dogma actually came into existence in that character, or more precisely, *whether its origin allows of such a judgment in regard to it.*

It must be stated first that the establishment of the truth of the Christian faith on experience, looked at as a scientific principle, does not stand examination. Of course, in the matter of Christian conviction, we have to do with issues of one's inner personal life. And there can be no objection to their being conceived under the general title of experience. But what makes experience in other spheres become a ground of common and certain knowledge, is wanting in this experience. The objects of it do not *carry compulsion;* they are not given in the same way for all mankind; this experience occurs in the sphere of inward freedom. One can admittedly convince no one on the ground of it of the truth of the Christian faith. But in that case it is also unsuited for being a principle *enabling those who share it to come to an understanding on the scientific question.* It is, no doubt, an indispensable element of Christian and theological knowledge, in so far as one requires to know this whole sphere from experience, in order to be able to understand the phenomena of religion and to speak about religious things as ascertained facts. But it is not suited for being a principle. As such it would require to have objective support, to stand above the personal feelings and aspirations of the individual mind, whereas in truth it is precisely on these that it depends. And with all this the fact is still left out of sight, that theology, when thus based on a Christian experience which is unintelligible to one who is not a Christian, is relegated to a position of

isolation in which it is unable to perform one of its most essential tasks, that of Apologetics.

But this does not immediately concern the subject before us. Here the question is not, whether the principle accomplishes all that it ought to do, but whether it is correct to derive the origin of dogma from the faith of the Church, and to understand dogma itself as evidence of that faith. I have not been able to leave that first point out of consideration, for the simple reason that it forms the general background of the question here discussed.

What more distinctly concerns the subject before us is the fact that dogma refuses to be interpreted in this way. They are very subtle reflections by means of which, in the *System of the Christian Certainty*, Frank reaches his derivation of the articles of dogma from men's Christian consciousness, reflections in which there is no want of perilous conclusions. They lead to the end in view only because what should be the result is presupposed. The matter of subjective Christianity is antecedently conceived in a manner answering rather to dogma than to Holy Scripture; and then dogma as the presupposition which it implies is derived from it. Anything else, however, is quite impossible. The Revelation in Christ, which naturally forms the content of all the main parts of dogma, is not at all conceived and proved by the latter as the object of saving faith, but estimated as the presupposition of the processes in which subjective Christianity ought to consist. That is essentially the *Catholic* conception of dogma. And therefore it cannot be proved that its articles are the expression of a religious faith which is governed by a

single idea, a faith that stands or falls with that practical idea and the reality of it; *i.e.* we cannot give them the stamp of articles of faith, because they are nothing of the kind. One must proceed as is done here, and by the complicated character of the reflections themselves which are offered prove in the clearest manner that two things are here brought together that do not harmonise with each other—the view which is as truly Evangelical and Protestant as it is characteristic of modern theology, viz. that the articles of dogma ought to be the *expression of the Church's faith*, and that dogma of an entirely different origin which fulfils its function in the Catholic system as *the mysterious object of piety*.

And now, in saying this, we have stated the point that is of chief moment here. It is a fiction to suppose dogma arose, even though it were by the intervention of theology, as the Church's witness to the facts of her faith. Rather was it *essentially* a theological process determined by philosophy, one in which the articles of dogma were constructed and gradually articulated so as to form the whole which is presented to us in orthodox Dogmatics. Or, to state the matter differently: the norms according to which Christianity was here set out in positive, distinct doctrines—and these norms alone are of consequence in this question—are derived from philosophy (p. 73). The conception of Frank that was examined is in contradiction with the facts of history. It can be explained only by the embarrassment of a theology that purposes to adhere to dogma, but no longer ventures in the old Protestant fashion to lay stress on Holy Scripture as the rule of knowledge

in theology. For by estimating dogma as it does, it secures a form at once Protestant and modern for its exaltation of dogma above Scripture. But the happy expedient suffers shipwreck from the facts. What lies at the back of it is the view treated of above, which represents dogma as originating through the Holy Spirit ruling in the Church. We find ourselves referred to that view again as the real basis of a theology that clings to the ground of dogma. The question therefore is, whether that view in its traditional form is sound.

There are three causes from which it suffers shipwreck. In the *first* place, there is the often mentioned fact which was exhaustively discussed in the first chapter, that it is only a leap that leads from the offshoots of the doctrinal structure supplied by the Apostles to the beginnings of dogma. Here we have no advance in a straight line. While the objects are the same, we have different modes of conducting the process of thought-formation; the guiding idea in each case is different. Whence the altered form of dogma includes at the same time a material departure from Scripture (p. 97). *Further*, the view in question is not consistent with the determinative significance of the Reformation. We can share it only if we take our stand as Protestants, not on the guiding ideas of the Reformation, but on later Dogmatics, after the Protestant renovations had fallen back again into the main body of doctrine (p. 261). If, instead of doing that, theology itself takes the main *positive* ideas of the Reformation in earnest, that involves as complete a transformation of the system of belief as that which the Reformation unquestionably effected in the regu-

lation of life in Protestant Christendom. In the *third* place, lastly, with that estimate of dogma one finds himself utterly at a loss in view of the breaking up of it as consummated in the last centuries. One can merely conceive this as something that ought not to be; one must then simply and absolutely condemn this whole epoch. But that procedure is not consistent with Christian faith in divine Providence, though it is precisely that faith that forms the background to the other belief that the Spirit of God rules in the development of things ecclesiastical. So too it stands in strange contradiction with the fact that the breaking up of dogma is nothing but *the direct continuation* of the preceding process of construction and development. Furthermore, in this way the risk of the Christian faith getting to be pushed round to Rationalism or Pantheism becomes permanent, since the motives leading to each of these issues are found in dogma. If anything whatever, therefore, can be described as being refuted by history, and as being *definitively* incapable of restoration in the sphere of Protestantism, the view in question must be so represented.

Before we go further, and find out what the last word on the subject must be, we have to observe that along with the traditional view another which is relatively opposed to it asserts itself in our midst. I mean the one which Strauss represented in his Dogmatics, and to which F. C. Baur especially, by his labours in the history of dogma, gave a position of consequence among large classes of people. It is distinguished from that first mentioned—and in point of form that is an advantage—by its embracing the whole develop-

ment including the last stage, that of dissolution, and by succeeding in making it intelligible with the express inclusion of the latter. The gist of it is that dogma was formed in the early Church for the purpose of fixing the notion of the Christian faith. But, in the first place, true to the nature of religious faith and thought, it appeared in the general form of pictorial conception, the imagination contributing its share. Thereafter Scholasticism undertook the task of taking the dogma which arose in this way, and developing it further and elaborating it by means of the Categories of the Understanding. In that process there inevitably appeared the contradictions which are inherent in dogma, because it gives expression to spiritual truth in the inadequate form of pictorial thought. That elaboration by means of the Categories of the Understanding therefore found its natural continuation in the criticism by means of the same Categories which the eighteenth century directed against dogma. The result of that criticism was the complete destruction of dogma in its old form. But not as if matters were to rest in this negative result. The old form, it is true, is gone and is irrevocable. But that is no loss. Rather is the possibility in that way opened up, and the task imposed, of conceiving the spiritual content of dogma anew, and setting it forth in the only form that is adequate to it, that which is spiritual and true to thought.

If we compare this view with the traditional one, the first impression is that between them there is an opposition of far-reaching import. And under all circumstances that indeed is correct. But after all we

have here again an opposition within the framework of a primary idea held by them in common. The modern view is formed after the model of the traditional, the origin of which lies in Catholicism, though from an opposite standpoint. Indeed, so far as it too adheres in its own way to the religious point of view as the loftiest, it may be said of it also that it regards the whole development as having taken place under the guidance of the Divine Spirit. The difference is only this, that it understands that guidance not as being supernatural, but as something immanent in the development of the human spirit, or, more precisely, that it understands it in the sense of Pantheism. For that very reason it is indifferent to the well-marked supernatural character of dogma, and so it comes to conceive the breaking up of it, which affected it precisely in that character, as an integral part of the whole development. But as in this way it comes into line with the old conception, the same objection which we brought against the latter is in part decisive as against it.

In the modern view as well as the other, the fact remains wholly unnoticed, that dogma is far from being a pure and unadulterated expression of the Christian faith, that it rather proceeded from a commingling of Christianity with the religious and moral type of thought peculiar to ancient philosophy. The whole way of looking at the matter is trammelled to the last by the Catholic prejudice which regards the development of ecclesiastical doctrine as exhibiting nothing but the self-evident and adequate completion of the Christian faith as attested in Holy Scripture. The influence of philosophy on dogma is justified by the close

affinity between Christianity and Platonism. But that is simply not correct. However one thinks he ought to estimate the fact, it remains under all circumstances true that here a transition has occurred from Scripture to something new. We cannot therefore arrive at a correct understanding of the development and breaking up of dogma, such as represents the actual state of the case, if we do not have regard from the first to that fact in the whole extent of its significance. And with respect to the Reformation also, the modern view, although expressly insisting on the Protestant standpoint, is not otherwise related to it than is the traditional. It is true we cannot say that, like the latter, it takes its stand on later orthodox Dogmatics. According to it, it is rather the Socinians and Arminians with whom, as the real originators of the modern criticism directed against dogma, the new period begins. The positive ideas of the Reformation are not estimated in their true sense and their determinative significance. Here too, what is proclaimed as Protestantism is only that opposition to Catholicism which fails itself to leave the Catholic ground.[1]

The case is different, in the next place, with the third objection which we raised above against the traditional view. This modern conception succeeds, as was mentioned already, in understanding the breaking up of dogma as a link in the whole chain. And it is a true observation that the criticism of that dogma was a continuation of the treatment of it by means of the Categories of the Understanding which was in vogue

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 396 ff. (cf. note to p. 61 in this book).

in the Middle Ages, although that observation can by no means amount to an exhaustive estimate of the facts of the case. But this advantage is more than counterbalanced by another defect. In order to be able to enter into the modern conception, one would have to make up one's mind to regard Pantheistic mysticism as the spiritual kernel of Christianity. Now, the fact must not be further considered here, that that is not consistent with the conviction of Christian faith. It may be mentioned, however, in passing, that the representatives of the modern view themselves confirm what is said, inasmuch as they succeed in preserving their agreement with actual Christianity only by means of a permanent Dualism, consisting of Religion as represented by pictorial forms and Speculation which rises to the level of pure thought, *i.e.* by a theory which, kindred as it is with the principle of twofold truth, carries within itself from the first the seeds of death. In like manner we may pass over the question whether the philosophy which forms the basis of this view can really be maintained to be true: almost everywhere at the present day we see the lances of criticism pointed against it. Here we shall only note the fact that even antiquity produced a kindred religious and philosophical movement, viz. in Neo-Platonism. If this conception were true, the result of it would mean not much else than that the Christian religion had proved to be a great error affecting universal history. But can that be seriously taken to be an estimate of the history of Christianity and its teaching? At all events, it can only be so regarded from a standpoint which, like Materialism, denies the independence of mental

and historical life, or which, like Pessimism, denies the reason there is in things. Where we have an idealistic and indeed a religious conception of history, the very conception which Christianity itself in the last resort seeks to represent, this result of the view in question means only that it ends in consequence in a *reductio ad absurdum.*

We return now to the fundamental view, of which this modern theory proves to be the counterpart. The conception with which it deals we shall be warranted in describing without hesitation, from the general character of it, as one belonging to the Philosophy of History. Now we expect of a view which falls under the Philosophy of History that it will be comprehensive, taking into consideration the *whole* of the conditions of social and civilised life in the period it embraces. Instead of that, we find that this estimate of dogma and its development isolates its object from the main course of History in order to allow of the *exclusive* contemplation of it. That must necessarily be surprising. The question very naturally arises, What is the reason of it?

The answer is simple and easy. It follows from the fact that the roots of this estimate, founded as it is on the Philosophy of History, lie in Catholicism. For if we conceive it in its original connection as thus given, the error just mentioned falls away. Catholicism brings not merely dogma but also the constitution of the Church and all ecclesiastical institutions, indeed the whole social arrangements of the community as moulded by Christian morality, arrangements which have primarily to be regulated by the Church, under

the same point of view. All that was developed step by step with inherent, divine necessity, and must remain as it is till the end of time. True, there is much wanting for the complete realisation of the ideal. But that must be put to the account of unbelief and the foes of the Church. It does not destroy the claim of absolute validity. In particular, it makes no difference in that estimate of the Church's history which represents everything as having been developed in it by divine appointment. Moreover, by means of the principle of tradition, that estimate is brought into connection with the divine Revelation in Christ, viz. by means of the fiction of an oral tradition proceeding from Christ and the Apostles, and by the correlative fiction that the Church's faith and the Church's constitution were the same from the very first, and that what was really valid from the very first has only been defined from time to time in express terms as dogma, and proclaimed as a practical principle. Still, that may be left out of sight. These fictions, it is true, are indispensable for official Catholicism, especially in its polemic with Protestants: in seeking to outbid their principle of the determinative significance of the original Revelation of God, those fictions claim back that principle for the Catholic Church. But apart from the underlying thought that the germ of all ecclesiastical doctrines and institutions must be antedated by being referred to the New Testament period, it is not necessary to represent the Catholic view in that crude and clumsy form. Möhler's conception of tradition, according to which a real development took place starting from given impulses which determined all that followed, the

image which he employs of the stock of divine truth in the Church increasing by reason of its intrinsic value, not only tells of vastly more acumen, but represents more accurately the real state of the case. But however depicted, the Catholic view alluded to is one that embraces all the circumstances and is consistent with itself. The estimate of dogma with which we have to do is an integral part of it; here it appears in its natural connection.

But now no Evangelical Christian will or can deny that this general view maintained by Catholicism has proved to be erroneous. In the Mediæval Catholic Church things were so developed that the Reformation became necessary, the Reformation which exhibits in the weightiest matters simply *a break with the past.* Not only were the most important ecclesiastical institutions, the roots of which reach back beyond the Middle Ages to the early Church, rejected at the Reformation as being irreconcilable with Christianity, but above all did the social organisation of the community as leavened by Christian morality, undergo a total transformation, such as involved with equal completeness a renunciation of the form in which the kingdom of God had in the first instance been historically realised. All this was not aimed at or contemplated when the Reformation began. But it was gradually developed with inherent necessity as a consequence of the revival of faith. The warrant for this break with the past, a break which is really a radical one in its way, can thus be denied only by one who is minded to return to the Catholic ideals, or who would at least heartily welcome the event if a return

of the kind occurred on a large scale. But that is thought of by isolated individuals at most, just as, on the other hand, such break loose occasionally from Catholicism and rise to the higher Evangelical standpoint. It may be confidently affirmed that among all religious parties and theological schools included in Protestantism, there is scarcely on anything else such unity to be found as there is with respect to the conviction that the hierarchical ideals and the institutions of worship peculiar to Catholicism must be for ever rejected by us as being irreconcilable with pure Christian faith.

Why then must we rest in the Catholic conclusion so far as the development of doctrine alone is concerned? I do not ask why that was the case to begin with. That must be understood as inevitable, and we must be able to weigh the issue accordingly, in the manner repeatedly described in this work. But why must that be the end of the matter? Does the view we are dealing with gain in any way by being isolated from the estimate put upon the other departments of history, and by being restricted to the sphere of doctrine? Anything but that is the result; it thereby loses its support, and seems a foreign element standing in a connection that conflicts with it. Or can one appeal to the fact that in Protestantism doctrine has gained preponderance over ecclesiastical institutions, and that from this there follows the necessity of adhering in this particular sphere to an estimate which has everywhere else to be abandoned? It is due perhaps to that fact that among large classes of people no contradiction is noticed here. But the fact is not enough

to serve as a justification for the course adopted. In the first place, it is not observed here that Evangelical Protestantism is a general system embracing faith and life as much as Catholicism is; and that it is only at the cost of internal consistency, *i.e.* ultimately of the power of maintaining its existence, that a system can resign its right to carry out and complete its primary and guiding ideas in all their applications. But above all, if such an illusion was possible before it was proved whether Catholic dogma, with the improvements necessarily made by the Reformation, satisfies the Protestant claims with regard to doctrine, it certainly ought no longer to be possible after proof in the case has been supplied on a great scale, and the evidence has turned out to be incontestably on the negative side (p. 267). This Philosophy of History cannot by any loophole get clear of the objection that it is a survival of Catholicism on Protestant ground; that therefore it must either lead back to Catholicism, or else, by failing to give a comprehensive estimate of Protestantism, it lands in the strange idea that the origination of orthodox dogma is the real essence of the part contributed by Christianity to universal history.

It does not need to be shown further in detail that the traditional view even in the modern philosophical conception of it, is liable to the same objection. In it too, observation is confined to the sphere of doctrine. It turns out to be more comprehensive only in so far as it concedes more right to the general factors of mental life. But the error in principle alluded to is not thereby eliminated. This modern estimate of dogma has opposed to it the ideal requirement of a con-

nected and rational interpretation of history as surely as it has the facts against it.

But now, if we take a conjunct view of all the circumstances, there results, it seems to me, the inevitable obligation of having to seek another estimate of the development of ecclesiastical doctrine, one that answers better not only to the principles of Evangelical Protestantism, but also to the facts of history. The preceding discussions afford material for the purpose. Let us attempt, then, to utilise that material in this sense.

It is a study in the Philosophy of History that we are occupied with. In a study of the kind, what is of chief moment is on the one hand the guiding thought or principle, on the other the historical facts that form the object to be estimated. The better these two sides correspond to each other, the more the facts themselves seem to demand the principle, so much the more thorough and convincing does such a study turn out to be. Yet it can never be carried out so as to have the translucency of a pure theory. Whatever shape the principle takes, it can never be merely *known;* it must at the same time have recognition accorded to it within the heart of him who is to give his assent to the study.

We turn our attention first to the one side, and seek to realise exactly *the guiding thought.* Regarded generally, it can be no other than that which determines the traditional view itself—faith in the rule of the Divine Spirit in the Church, in the development of Christendom. Any other estimate would not satisfy

the connection of Christian faith and Christian theology. Even the modern view, as was stated, adheres to it in its own way. However, there is not very much gained yet with this general description of the principle. That is shown by the mere fact that it does not exclude the modern conception of the principle, though it is Pantheistic. Here all depends on the more exact definition to be given. But to arrive at that, there is no other way except to take as the basis of our procedure that faith in Revelation which is specifically *Christian*. For, after the manner in which divine Revelation was itself accomplished, must the divine guidance that succeeded also take shape, that guidance which has as its object the promulgation and embedding of revealed truth in the world of men.

But let us understand exactly the point we are dealing with. The fact that a divine Revelation has taken place can never be demonstrated to any one in the way in which a fact of sense or a conclusion of logic can be. It requires *faith;* only he who subjects himself to it in faith can arrive at a recognition of it. Consistently with this, the How of Revelation, the mode of its accomplishment, always retains a side that is a mystery to us. Thus it is the nature of religious faith to assume divine operations in the world, the very notion of which, since they are divine, implies that *the mode* of operation remains hidden from man. This is involved with no less certainty in the nature of the case. For suppose we succeeded in explaining and understanding these divine operations like other occurrences, what would be gained? Nothing except this, that the operations held to be divine would

have been traced back to some one of the forms of action and growth within the world which are known to us, which are familiar to us from a varied experience. But that amounts very nearly to the *destruction* of the faith which, according to the intention, has to be *explained* in that way. The next step after such an explanation, from the nature of the case, and it is no less the result of historical experience, is to deny divine action altogether. If, therefore, religious faith is to exist—and that is the supposition here—it must be allowed to stand as it is; *i.e.* it must be permitted to assume divine operations in the world, the How of which it remains impossible, if we go to the very bottom, to explain. This must not be interpreted as a want of faith; rather must an element be recognised here that belongs so essentially to its nature that the destruction of it means the destruction of faith itself. If, therefore, we ask how divine Revelation is accomplished in the world (and therefore how the rule of the Divine Spirit over the development of the Church is actualised), we are not wanting to know how that happens *on the side of God*: this connection with God is the point where for us men, who are not God, there remains a mystery. What we want to know can only be, in what way Revelation, which of course, being a *Revelation for us*, must always at the same time be something taking place in the world, becomes apparent in earthly, intramundane occurrences.

But, in answer to this question we have next to say that, according to Christian faith, the Revelation of God in the world is throughout *historically mediated*. The meaning of this proposition is secured against mis-

understandings by the explanation just given. It is not at all intended by it to deny the reality of divine Revelation, to make faith in that Revelation or in the rule of the Spirit of God in the Church become lowered, say, to an *estimate* of history which is allowed without being really true, and without having any great significance in helping us to understand human affairs. What is meant is rather faith in the Revelation of God in history in the full sense of the word, a faith that has no doubt of what it does not see, and which at the same time forms the key to the fullest understanding of these things, that understanding of them which is true to the reality. What must be avoided as being an undertaking as irrational as it is irreligious, is only the attempt to understand this relation of God to history *from the side of God*, instead of recognising here a limit to our knowledge. We are directed to seek in history that Revelation of God in which we believe as Christians, and to realise it objectively in all its parts as a Revelation which is historically mediated.

If it is objected to this, that the needs of religion extend to the possession of God Himself, to the possession of Him directly, that the pious person will hear nothing of any mediation, the fact which one starts from is correct, but the application is false. It is correct that in Christian piety we seek communion with the Divine Spirit and life, and are aware that we can find blessedness only in this direct communion; that on the heights of the inner world of faith all thought of any kind of mediation vanishes. It must be conceded further, that it seems to be suggested that we should go on to make an application of this truth in realising

divine Revelation, and to demand that the latter should be thought of in the same way as direct. But he who does that has yielded to a natural illusion. This directness has its sphere in the religious spirit of the *individual*, and never forms part of the idea of divine Revelation, which, as being the starting-point of Christianity in the world, is *the same for us all*. If we transfer it to that idea, we do not by any means gain what we wish. For that Revelation does not cease after all to be one which is historically mediated so far as the individual is concerned, since as a member of the Church of Christ he cannot presume to be himself a bearer of Revelation. Or else, as soon as he does so, as soon as he puts any alleged revelations which he apprehends within himself in place of the objective Revelation to which he owes obedience, he ceases thereby to be a member of the Christian Church. With equal certainty the religious experiences of the individual, though he rises in them for the moment above every species of mediation, rest nevertheless, as being Christian in their nature, on manifold historical intermediaries. In short, it is easily understood how the emphatic assertion of the invariable occurrence of historical mediation should seem at first sight to be exposed to serious objections. Closer consideration shows at once that no further consequence can be deduced, that this emphatic assertion is necessary if we are to keep within the limits indicated by *Christian* faith.

But that Christian faith is indeed in the position I have stated, I do not require to demonstrate here again in detail; I shall only recall the fact that the summit

and centre of Revelation according to that faith is the life of a *historical* Person, and that it is no less the case that what precedes that life for the purpose of preparing for the perfect Revelation, or that what follows it in order to bring the Revelation home to the infant Church for its acceptance, bears the character of historical development. At present it is quite a definite point in that connected chain and it alone that concerns us. And it is this, that divine Revelation has only succeeded in perfecting itself in the world amidst a persistent conflict with human weakness and perversity; that in its progress there is no want of real catastrophes; that it is not exhibited as a uniform development in a straight line, but as one that advances in stages. For such a picture is presented to us by the history of which the Holy Scriptures as *actual historical* records testify. The catastrophe of the Exile is the centre of the economy of the Old Testament Revelation. The fact that the chosen people of the Lord consign Him who was promised of the Lord to the death of the cross, indicates the point of transition between the Old Covenant and the New. And even the Apostolic Church, high as the rank is which that particular Church claims in the history of Revelation, at once became the scene of fresh oppositions and conflicts; and these themselves served as means for the development of the full knowledge of Jesus Christ. In fact, there is no trace here of a history like that concocted by the Catholic Church, where everything exists in germ from the first, and blade is gradually laid upon blade, each destined to last for ever just as it is formed. That is genuine and real history in which

something *new* comes into existence, in which one stage surmounts another, and so out of conflict there springs up that divine truth by which men are destined to be blessed. The traces found in *Biblical* history of a view of this matter resembling that entertained by Catholicism have the same origin as the latter itself has, *i.e.* they are the product of a *natural* religious pragmatism, and are plainly recognisable as such.

There is still a complete want among us of a theory and history of divine Revelation, which take account with equal earnestness and emphasis of the facts and the interpretation of them in the sense of the Christian faith. Not because that would be an undertaking impossible in itself, but because the strictly historical investigation of the facts has to work its way in opposition to the old unhistorical forms of faith, and in so doing itself fails often enough to represent the Christian faith, confusing it with these forms. That again is only an example of the manner in which advances in the kingdom of God take place in a way which is historically mediated. However, there is no doubt that in time we shall arrive in Protestant theology at such a theory and history, and that they will confirm what has been indicated above.

What follows from all this for the question here dealt with? Just this, that it would be absurd to expect that the succeeding history of divine Revelation, *i.e.* of the promulgation of its truth in the world, will suddenly assume quite an altered character, will strike out quite a new line. Indeed, if it did so, it would not be consistent with the economy of divine wisdom in the history of Revelation proper, which

must certainly be adapted in the most thorough-going manner to the nature of human concerns. Or we would have to assume that in the great theatre of universal history human perversity and narrowness accommodated themselves to the divine intentions more easily than in the closely confined theatre of the history of the people of Israel. Each of these suppositions, however, refutes itself. If, therefore, we take the *Christian* faith as our guiding principle in estimating the development of the Church, not an unregulated religious judgment which overleaps historical mediation, we shall, it is true, conceive that development as proceeding in all departments of life under divine guidance; but we shall not expect that in any of them, even in that of doctrine, it will continually have brought to light *pure* results, destined thenceforth to pass for such as have divine authority. We shall rather find every ground for the conjecture that the acceptance of Christianity will have been at first imperfect, and that it will have been reserved for the historical development to bring forth, through opposition and conflict and real catastrophes, under the Providence and active leading of the Divine Spirit, purer forms of Christianity in the world than that which was in the beginning could be: to believe in this sense in a continuation of divine Revelation in the world, even after its completion in Christ, is undoubtedly a necessary consequence of Christian faith. I say—in this sense. I mean—not in the sense that the perfect Revelation could itself be surpassed by anything that came after, or that it could ever cease to be the absolute norm of all that came after. But I do mean that the acceptance of the

salvation which is in Christ, the realisation of the Kingdom of God in the world, has again a history of its own which advances in stages, and that that history is not without significance even for the purpose of conceiving and estimating divine Revelation. To be clear on the latter point, we only require to think of the Apostles' expectation of the speedy return of the Lord. In view of that particular matter the truth is impressed on us with irresistible plainness, that even the later history still contains divine lessons for us. And every instructed person knows exactly what this element in the case signifies, knows that although it is only something special, the general question itself is really settled by it.

So much for the guiding thought. If now we compare with it the actual history of dogma, as it has been sketched in the preceding pages, it follows that the real course which was traversed entirely confirms the expectation and conjecture expressed above. Divine Revelation was accepted in the first instance in such a manner that the Christian faith formed a compromise with ancient culture. The Kingdom of God at first assumed a form in history which was conditioned by that circumstance: it thus presents itself as the Catholic Church. And this peculiarity, moreover, applies to the Church's life *in all its aspects.* Thus no one will fail to perceive the essential connection that exists between the ancient ideal of the State and the Catholic conception of the Church. I do not mean merely that the imperial monarchy of Rome was the ground prepared for the Church, on which it was possible for the kingdom of God to be realised. I

mean, above all, that the universal kingdom of God again received here the form of a particular, spiritual, imperial monarchy, embracing the various nations. No less can the influence of ancient heathendom be observed in the Church's institutions, especially in the idea of magical operation in the Sacraments. And the same thing applies, lastly, to the presentation of Christian truth in ecclesiastical dogma, as has been shown at length in the first chapter.

How could one adhere now to a Christian conception of history, and yet seek to deny that it was under Divine Providence, under the leading of the Divine Spirit, that this accommodation was established? Here the facts are notoriously opposed to such a judgment pronounced in the name of Christianity. Or is it not also evident, as has often been set forth, that the coming of Christ took place in the fulness of the time, in so far as everything was prepared in the imperial dominion of Rome for receiving the fructifying germs of divine Revelation? Indeed, we may hazard the assertion that if Christianity had not found the ground prepared, and if it had not also in the first instance assumed in the world a form *suited to that ground*, *i.e.* the Catholic form, it would have been lost to the world altogether. Without Catholicism, as representing down to the sixteenth century the common past of all Western Christendom, without this gradual mingling, prolonged through the centuries, of the leaven of Christianity with the great mass of the nations of the world, an Evangelical Christianity would never have become possible. There can be no question but this historical development was

accomplished under the guidance of the Divine Spirit.

Only it was not guided in such a way that the precipitates of it have to claim a definitive authority in consequence. They must not be regarded as possessing that significance, whether we look to the formation of the Kingdom of God in the world or to the institutions of the Church: in this judgment all the sections of Protestant Christendom agree. But neither must they be so regarded when we look to doctrine. Dogma is an integral part of that total phenomenon of Christianity which is rooted in ancient culture, and which is simply nothing but Catholicism. It is a great mistake if we think we can take doctrine in particular apart from that connection and assign a history to it by itself. The Protestant organisation of things ecclesiastical cannot in the long run be reconciled with Catholic forms of dogma. Protestant theology is directed by history itself to build up the edifice of doctrine in the sense of Protestantism in a more thorough-going manner than has hitherto been realised.

But perhaps we shall succeed in tracing back what happened in the formation of the early Catholic Church to a general rule, to a "law" of historical development. It may be observed, it seems to me, on a large scale and in details, that new vital forces, creative thoughts, which always assume as such a negative attitude towards what exists, are nevertheless actualised in the first instance in the existing forms. The attempt to overcome in a *substantial* sense the forces which prevail, makes an accommodation to the existing

forms necessary at the outset—that accommodation not being understood as a matter of reflection or arbitrary choice, but as the procedure which is most convenient and really natural for the originators of such a movement themselves. It is then reserved for a later time, when the old forms have been exploded by the new content, to recognise this as the position of matters, and to form a purer conception than was previously entertained of the new and precious content. Thus it will not be possible entirely to ignore the fact that the attempts at theological exposition found in the Apostolical writings (which must of course be distinguished from the preaching of Christ contained in them) stand in a relation of this kind to the Old Testament. Then this truth applies in particular to the turning-point where Christianity gained a footing among the nations of the world. Christianity certainly contained a denial of the ideals of antiquity. But in the forms supplied by antiquity it was in the first instance actualised. And if the condition of things which was thus produced in Christendom was so long maintained intact, that is due principally to the fact that the period concerned was also a time of revolution and reconstruction among the Western nations to which history knows no parallel.

It was not destined to last for ever. The break with it is represented by the Reformation, the beneficial consequences of which have extended even to that portion of the Church which set itself in opposition to it. But here we confine our view to the further development of things within the domain of Protest-

ant Christendom. And there we immediately become aware again of a phenomenon which has to be brought under the rule just mentioned, the rule that the new is first accepted in the forms of the old. True, that rule applies here essentially in the province of doctrine only. As regards social organisation and ecclesiastical institutions, the Reformation gained a distinct success at the very first. That may be due to the fact that in these provinces we are confronted with a more decided alternative than in the other. One must accept or reject the hierarchical organisation of the Church and the corresponding ideals of life; a third course is scarcely possible here; and according to what is done the force of circumstances takes shape, and in time necessarily puts an end to any half measures that may have characterised the state of transition. Moreover, the interest of the rulers, of the secular powers generally, contributed to the result in this case. It is different, however, in the sphere of doctrine, where all sorts of transitions and intermediate positions are possible, or at all events seem at first to be possible. And thus Protestant theology was obliged at first to make the attempt to use the material of Catholic Scholasticism in giving theological form to the Evangelical faith. It may perhaps be said, too, that habits of *thought* are still more persistently fixed than habits of *life*. On the other hand, they are more pliable, inasmuch as they do not bring so distinctly defined institutions into existence, institutions from which they themselves in turn afterwards derive support. At all events the fact is patent, that in the province of doctrine the habits of thought which had been

formed were maintained in the manner previously described.

Looked at now from this basis, the breaking up of dogma in Protestant theology becomes intelligible as a necessary part of the whole development. Doubtless it is by no means a continuation of the Reformation in the sense of being a positive advance. In order to assume that it is, we would have to regard the Socinians and Arminians as the genuine representatives of the ideas of the Reformation. Rather, however, do the roots of the movements identified with these lie partly in Mediæval theology, partly in Humanism, and not at all in the Reformation. Furthermore, it is impossible not to observe that even the *positive* ideas of Protestantism were involved in the general process of destruction. This phase of the development is a continuation of the Reformation only in so far as it supplied proof of the unfitness of the doctrinal forms of Catholicism to maintain themselves in the Protestant Church, and to serve for the support and regulation of piety in it. Nevertheless, we may speak of a leading and an activity of the Divine Spirit even here. What has been broken up is by no means the Christian faith, but Catholic dogma, the compromise contained in it between that faith and ancient philosophy. And that has happened in order that in Protestant Christendom the Christian faith may end in being exhibited in its purity and explicated fully and consistently in a way which is in harmony with the Reformation. This issue is an indispensable factor in the development of Christianity to the highest stage which the Reformation has reached, and which is

at the same time a revival of original Christianity, although under altered conditions of general life, and therefore, in so far, itself a new thing engendered in history by the Spirit of God.

But the connection of this later issue with the Reformation must still be looked at from another point of view. It may be truly affirmed that, owing to the intense display of energy at the Reformation, the development of *religion* outstripped that of mental life in general. But then for that very reason, since all that concerns mental life is really connected in one whole, the Reformation was itself prevented from carrying out its ideas forthwith. For principally because the Mediæval habits of thought maintained their supremacy for a while, things took that course in Protestant theology which we noticed in the third chapter (p. 192). But that supremacy has been broken by the development of science in the last centuries. Mental life as a whole has now—I recall what was said in reference to Kant at p. 286—made up for the start which the religious life had gained owing to the Reformation. Thus after this period of destruction the possibility is now offered of bringing the Reformation in theology to its full issue.

And, on the other hand, even in the time of dissolution itself, we must observe, there is also to be found the inception of this new growth. To that period of the *Aufklärung* and Rationalism we owe the beginnings of a *Biblical study* and a *historical theology* that have set themselves free from Catholic prejudices. But who will dispute the affirmation that that is a fruit of the Reformation in the best *positive* sense

of the word? Indeed, there is hardly a Protestant theologian at this day, let him belong to whatever school he may, that does not in some measure share in that gain. It is no less true that Kant, and indeed Schleiermacher himself properly speaking, still belong to this period so far as their merits with respect to the science of religion and theology are concerned. But it may be said of them in like manner, that in some measure they render service to every branch of theological research in the Protestantism of the present day. And we cannot deny the progress indicated by these names; we can do so as little as we can in another field dispute, say, the assertion that it marks an advance in science, if instead of traditional opinions about things, the things themselves are made the object of investigation. It is no less true that this advance takes place on the lines of the Reformation, although the specific conclusions of Kant and partly also those of Schleiermacher fail to give the full sense of the Christian faith. In this way there is imposed on Protestant theology the great task of combining the two lines of development, the improved study of History and the advance in the Science of Religion, under the fundamental idea of the Reformation, the idea that true Christianity consists in the faith which has accepted the Revelation of God in Christ.

If we take the sum of the matter, there are three causes organically connected with each other from which the traditional view suffers shipwreck. The difference between the preaching of the Bible and the first beginnings of dogma does not accord with its (Catholic) framework. Therefore it must pass over in

silence the change *of principle, affecting the whole issue,* which is indicated by the Reformation *in the sphere of doctrine as elsewhere;* and it does not know what to make of the breaking up of dogma in the eighteenth century. These are just the three points on which stress is laid in our estimate of the history, while that estimate is more in harmony too with the *Christian faith in Revelation* than the traditional view is. But it follows from this estimate of ours, and indeed what is deduced from it is *the judgment of history itself,* that a definitive restoration of dogma is impossible in Protestant theology and in the Protestant Church. Indeed, it is not merely impossible; there *ought* to be nothing of the kind, if it is true at all that in the domain of Protestantism the sole authority of divine Revelation ought to be final.

Doubtless such a judgment with regard to dogma is not unfrequently explained as being due to a want of the historical sense, or described as a want of respect for what has become historical. I think I have shown how erroneous that explanation is, however much it is recommended by its simplicity and convenience. The judgment expressed above with regard to dogma is derived from a *comprehensive* estimate of history and an acceptance of the lessons it teaches, whereas the traditional view is founded on a *defective* study of history. History itself contains plainly enough a destructive criticism of dogma. And false as the application was which Strauss made of his conclusion, inasmuch as he confused dogma with the Christian faith, the end of the matter will nevertheless be the verdict he pronounces, viz. that this

criticism, in contradistinction to the subjective criticism of the individual, cannot in the long run be disregarded, that in the last resort it must claim the victory. But as regards respect for what has become historical—which we would like to acknowledge in the abstract in all sincerity—it has a limit fixed for it by the obedience which we owe to the truth, the truth from God which we have received in Christ, and which the Reformation has restored to us. *This very obedience prevents us from recognising dogma as such.* And in conflict with this obedience, as every Evangelical Christian will admit, respect for what has become historical is a Catholic but not a Protestant virtue.

CONCLUSION.

We recollect now that the object of our discussions is to discover a *proof for Christianity, i.e.* for the truth of the Christian faith. We set about the study of ecclesiastical dogma which is now brought to an end, chiefly because that dogma contains such a proof; and we were obliged to admit that that proof has gained importance in the history of the world, and that it is not advisable, therefore, to pass over dogma without coming to an understanding in reference to it. A person who is seeking a proof naturally looks round first of all to see whether one is not already in existence, and whether perhaps his only care is not to adapt to altered circumstances a line of thought which is offered to him and has long since been recognised. Now the result of our inquiry is that we do not find ourselves in that position. Certainly much of dogma, *i.e.* of the theology answering to it, that serves to connect Christianity with the rest of the content of our consciousness, will reappear in *any* method of proof. But the method of proof itself which has been followed here has not been able to hold its ground. Originating under definite historical presuppositions, it was again broken up and destroyed in the historical development of mental life as accomplished in Protestant Christendom. We conclude, therefore, that the proof sought for cannot be furnished

at all by means of *that* method which is put in application in dogma.

But let us understand exactly the result we have gained up to this point. It is, that the truth of the Christian faith cannot be proved by exalting faith to knowledge, by aiming at an *objective* knowledge and establishment of the *content* of the faith. Rather is it impossible for Christian faith to stand, if that undertaking is consistently carried out and completed. For *either*—if what we have described as the Rational and Empirical method is followed—the essential and characteristic truths of Christianity, those relating to the content of the Revelation of salvation, are set aside as irrational, as was done by the Rationalism of the eighteenth century; *or*—the traditional Speculative method being adopted — Christianity is transformed from the foundation in the sense of Mystical Natural Religion, as the Speculative theology of the nineteenth century, with its offshoots reaching down to the present, attempts to do. But whichever course is followed, the Christian faith is not proved by such means, but is essentially curtailed, transformed, in fact destroyed. It follows from this that these methods are not consistent with the distinctive sense of the Christian faith. What has not been shown as yet, however, is that *those methods themselves are altogether erroneous.* Supposing, therefore, they existed of right, and that what a person had to recognise as *true* required to be confirmed by means of them—in that case the final decision would be that it is not Christianity, but a wisdom more or less akin to it, although on the other hand also opposed to it, that

proves to be the truth for the human race. Then, though Christianity might continue among the people, the thinker would really be able to accept only particular parts of it, or would have to transform it, as the case might be, in order that he might accept it.

Now, one who is persuaded of the truth of the Christian faith will at once draw the conclusion from this position of matters, that it is rather the case that those methods are erroneous *because* they stand in this relation to Christianity. And in fact something leading to this issue appears also from our studies as they have been prosecuted up to this point. We got to know the Critical Philosophy as the decisive turning-point in the second or negative half of the history of dogma. It assumes such a position there, however, because it did away with naïve dogmatic Rationalism. It is by no means the Christian faith that is subjected here to a destructive criticism; rather do the methods of proof to which the old Church had committed the Christian faith break down under it. That line of remark applies directly only to the Empirical and Rational explanation of the world. Indirectly it extends also to the Speculative method *in its traditional form*. For if, on the one hand, it is, when we go to the bottom, speculative presuppositions that naïve Rationalism rests upon (p. 280), it is again, contrariwise, on the soundness of the latter system that theoretical Speculation, with its claim to be absolute truth, is based. If Rationalism falls, the inference cannot be avoided that Speculation must be governed by *practical* ideas, and that even the traditional Speculative method must justify itself before this

tribunal. It can no longer claim in summary fashion to hold good for the thinking man as such.

It is not therefore merely as Christians that we have ground for the conjecture that those methods will not be correct, seeing that Christianity is not compatible with them. History also teaches the same thing. Only all that is not as yet *proved*. In reality, we have as yet only succeeded in seeing that as respects Christianity those methods are a failure. There remains the task of seeking another proof. With that particular task we meant to occupy ourselves in the second division of our inquiry. Then, in connection with these discussions that are to follow, the refutation of the traditional methods will further become apparent. For the first and most important step that will have to be taken in this other possible path, of which mention was previously made in the Introduction (p. 18 f.), must be to show that it is not theoretical knowledge, but only a practical faith, that is in a position to answer the ultimate questions we ask in regard to the Cause and Purpose of the world.

END OF VOL. I.

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